



Dorset Council

Date: Thursday, 18 July 2024
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

All members of Dorset Council are requested to attend this meeting of the Full Council.

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services
Meeting Contact susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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Agenda

Page No

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

5 - 16

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16th May 2024.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their decision councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Chair of Council.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTIONS

A period of 30 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to questions and statements on the business of the Council in the following order:

- (a) Questions and statements from Town and Parish Councils;
- (b) Questions and statements from those living or working in the Dorset Council area;

A person or organisation can submit either 1 question or 1 statement at each meeting.

You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for Full Council this will be circulated to all members of the council in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes of the meeting for the formal record but it will not be read out at the meeting. The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received by Democratic Services will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline below:

The full text of the question or statement must be received by 8.30am on Monday 15th July 2024. All submissions must be emailed to susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

Sub-divided questions will not be accepted;

Each question can consist of up to 450 words, including a pre-amble to set the context of the question;

When submitting a question please indicate who the question is for, i.e., the name of the Portfolio Holder;

You will need to include your full name, address and contact details;

All questions and statements will be published in full with the minutes of the meeting as a matter of public record.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

17 - 24

1.To consider a petition relating to the QE Leisure Centre at Wimborne

2.To consider a deputation relating to the Bibby Stockholm Barge

A period of 15 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to petitions in accordance with the council's petitions scheme.

A period of 15 minutes is allocated to receive and respond to deputations in accordance with the council's constitution.

The petitions scheme and procedures relating to deputations can be viewed at: [Council Procedure Rules](#)

- 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS FROM THE LEADER OF COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS**
- To receive any announcements and reports from the Leader of Council and members of the Cabinet.
- 8. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**
- To receive questions submitted by councillors. The deadline for receipt of questions is 8.30am on Monday 15th July 2024.
- 9. ADOPTION OF PURBECK LOCAL PLAN 2018-2034** 25 - 36
- To consider a report by the Senior Planning Policy Officer.
- 10. YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN** 37 - 100
- To consider a recommendation by the Cabinet.
- 11. ENHANCED DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKING** 101 - 110
- To consider a recommendation from the Audit & Governance Committee.
- 12. PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEES** 111 - 126
- To consider a recommendation from the Audit & Governance Committee.
- 13. TIMING OF MEETINGS** 127 - 130
- To consider a report by the Team Leader, Democratic Services.
- 14. NOTICE OF MOTION - THE NATURE EMERGENCY** 131 - 134
- To consider a Notice of Motion – The Nature Emergency.
- 15. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR WESTERN & SOUTHERN PLANNING COMMITTEE**
- Following the resignation of Cllr Chris Kippax from the Western & Southern Planning Committee to elect a Vice-chair of the committee for the remainder of the municipal year.
- 16. URGENT ITEMS**
- To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

17. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There is no exempt business scheduled for this meeting.



DORSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024

Present: Cllrs Val Potheary, Bill Trite, Jon Andrews, Jindy Atwal, Mike Baker, Shane Bartlett, Belinda Bawden, Laura Beddow, Derek Beer, Matt Bell, Richard Biggs, Bridget Bolwell, Dave Bolwell, Louise Bown, Alex Brenton, Piers Brown, Ray Bryan, Andy Canning, Will Chakawhata, Simon Christopher, Simon Clifford, Toni Coombs, Barrie Cooper, Richard Crabb, Peter Dickenson, Neil Eysenck, Beryl Ezzard, Scott Florek, Spencer Flower, Les Fry (Vice-Chair), Alex Fuhrmann, Simon Gibson, Barry Goringe, Hannah Hobbs-Chell, Sally Holland, Ryan Holloway, Ryan Hope, Rob Hughes, Nick Ireland, Jack Jeanes, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Stella Jones (Chair), Paul Kimber, Chris Kippax, Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Robin Legg, Cathy Lugg, Rory Major, Craig Monks, David Morgan, Steve Murcer, David Northam, Louie O'Leary, Emma Parker, Mike Parkes, Andrew Parry, Byron Quayle, Belinda Ridout, Julie Robinson, Steve Robinson, Pete Roper, David Shortell, Andy Skeats, Jane Somper, Duncan Sowry-House, Andrew Starr, Gary Suttle, Clare Sutton, Roland Tarr, David Taylor, Gill Taylor, Andy Todd, David Tooke, James Vitali, Claudia Webb, Sarah Williams, Ben Wilson and Carl Woode

Apologies: Cllrs Jill Haynes, Jon Orrell and Kate Wheller

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Jacqui Andrews (Service Manager for Democratic and Electoral Services), Paul Beecroft (Communications Business Partner), Hayley Caves (Member Development and Support Officer), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Susan Dallison (Democratic Services Team Leader), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Chris Harrod (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Jennifer Lewis (Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Matt Prosser (Chief Executive), Elaine Tibble (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Turnbull (Democratic and Electoral Services Apprentice) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1. Election of Chairman

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Canning that Cllr S Jones be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

There were no other valid nominations received.

Decision

That Cllr S Jones be elected as Chairman of the Council for 2024/25 Municipal Year.

2. **Election of Vice-chairman**

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and seconded by Cllr N Ireland that Cllr L Fry be elected Vice-Chairman for 2024/25.

It was proposed by Cllr L O’Leary and seconded by Cllr A Parry that Cllr K Wheller be elected Vice-Chairman for 2024/25.

Decision

That Cllr Les Fry be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2024/25 Municipal Year.

3. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Haynes, J Orrell and K Wheller.

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2024 were confirmed and signed.

5. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

6. **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

7. **Election of Leader of Council**

It was proposed by Cllr A Canning and seconded by Cllr R Legg that Cllr N Ireland be elected Leader of the Council for 2024/25.

Decision

That Cllr N Ireland be elected as Leader of the Council

8. **Appointment of Deputy Leader of Council, Portfolio Holders and Lead Members**

The Leader of the Council announced the following appointments:

Deputy Leader – Cllr R Biggs

Portfolio Holder(s):

Property & Assets, Economic Growth & Levelling Up – Cllr R Biggs

Finance & Capital Strategy – Cllr S Clifford

Corporate Development, Transformation, Digital & Change – Cllr R Holloway

Place Commissioned Services (Highways, Waste, Travel, Leisure etc.) – Cllr J Andrews

Children's Services, Education & Skills – Cllr C Sutton
Adult Social Care – Cllr S Robinson
Public Health, Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Regulatory Services – Cllr G Taylor
Planning and Emergency Planning – Cllr S Bartlett
Customer, Culture and Community Engagement – Cllr R Hope

9. **Announcements and Reports from the Leader of Council and Cabinet Members**

The Leader of the Council welcomed all members to the chamber and congratulated them on their election or re-election. He also thanked Members who had served on Dorset Council for the past five years, including those who had stood down or not re-elected. He advised that he would be launching a review into a number of key issues that had been raised by residents prior to the local elections taking place, details included:

- Car parking charges
- Bus services
- Cost of living crisis

Further to the points raised above, he advised that there were longer-term ambitions to increase the building of affordable housing to buy and rent, but this would need work to understand any associated implications. In addition to this, he referred to the previously declared climate emergency and highlighted his hopes that Councillors could continue working together collaboratively when making decisions to positively contribute to the residents of Dorset.

In response, Cllr P Kimber thanked the Leader for his introductory speech and welcomed his commitment to the environment, he queried how Dorset Council would prioritise the safeguarding of nature. Cllr Ireland advised that he would be bringing forward a motion the next meeting of Council that would declare a nature emergency.

10. **Public Participation - questions**

There were five questions received from members of the public and these are set out in Appendix A to these minutes.

11. **Public participation - petitions and deputations**

No petitions or deputations were received from members of the public.

12. **Questions from Councillors**

There were two Cllr questions, as appended to these minutes at Appendix B.

13. **Appointments to Committees, Joint Committees and Boards and election of Committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen**

The Director of Legal and Democratic presented a report setting out the proposed allocation of committee seats in line with political balance rules and, in accordance with the Council's constitution, to make appointments to committees, joint panels and boards. The report also included an appendix that set out the proposed Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of ordinary committees for the forthcoming year, which set out two committees whereby the position of Vice-Chair would be contested.

Contested Positions

Vice-Chair – People & Health Overview Committee

It was proposed by Cllr C Sutton and Seconded by Cllr B Bawden that Cllr J Orrell be nominated as Vice-Chair for People & Health Overview Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Canning that Cllr W Chakawata be elected as Vice Chair for People & Health Overview Committee.

Upon being put to the vote, Cllr Chakawata was duly elected as Vice Chair of the People & Health Overview Committee.

Vice-Chair – Licensing Committee

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Canning that Cllr L Bown be nominated as Vice-Chair for Licensing Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr R Hughes and seconded by Cllr P Roper that Cllr L Fry be nominated as Vice-Chair for Licensing Committee.

Upon being put to the vote, Cllr Bown was duly elected as Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee.

Decision

1. That the allocation of committee seats in accordance with political balance rules, and the appointments to ordinary committees, joint panels, and boards, as nominated by the Political Group Leaders, be approved for 2024/25 as set out in Appendices 1, 2 & 3 respectively;
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Legal & Democratic, in consultation with the appropriate Political Group Leader, to make in-year changes to appointments;
3. That Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees be elected for the 2024/25 municipal year as set out in Appendix 4 and per the results of the contested votes.

14. **Appointments to Outside Bodies, Joint Bodies and Panels**

The Director of Legal and Democratic presented a report setting out the proposed appointments to Outside Bodies, Joint Bodies and Panels.

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by A Canning

Decision

1. That the appointment of councillors to national and significant bodies in Appendix 1 be approved.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer, after consultation with Group Leaders, to make appointments and fill vacancies where appropriate.
3. That the appointment of councillors to local member positions in Appendix 3 be approved.

15. Dispensations for Councillors

The Leader of the Council presented a report setting out a proposal to grant a series of standing dispensations to enable members to take part in certain types of decision, where their participation might otherwise be questioned as a possible breach of the Council's Member Code of Conduct

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Canning

Decision

That the following dispensations be granted until the ordinary date of elections in May 2029:

1. **To all members:** to take part in agreeing the budget and the setting of council tax but not where the interest is as the owner of an additional property and the decision to be made relates to any council tax premium on dwellings occupied periodically (second homes).
2. **To all members:** to approve the Member Scheme of Allowances.
3. **To all members appointed to represent the Council on outside bodies:** to remain and to participate in any debate and decision in any council meeting and to deal with any matter as a Cabinet Member exercising executive functions, including individual executive delegated decision making.
4. **To executive members appointed to the Shareholder Committees of Care Dorset and the Dorset Centre of Excellence:** to remain and to participate in any debate and decision in any council meeting and to deal with any matter as a Cabinet Member exercising executive functions, including individual executive delegated decision making.
5. **To any members appointed to the Board of Homes Dorset:** To remain and to participate in any debate and decision in any council meeting and to deal with any matter as a Cabinet Member exercising executive functions, including individual executive delegated decision making.
6. **To any members or reserve members appointed to the South West Audit Partnership Ltd Owners Board:** To remain and to participate in any debate and decision in any council meeting and to deal with any matter as a Cabinet Member exercising executive functions, including individual executive delegated decision making.

16. **Sexual Harassment Policy**

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented a report setting out the recommendation from the Audit and Governance Committee, which met on 15 April 2024 to consider the publication of Guidance to Councillors about the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy.

It was proposed by Cllr R Biggs and seconded by Cllr N Lacey-Clark

Decision

That Full Council endorses the publication of Guidance to Councillors about the Council's Sexual Harassment Policy.

17. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

18. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business

Appendix A - Public Participation - Questions
Appendix B - Questions from Councillors

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 7.39 pm

Chairman

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Annual Meeting of Council

16th May 2024

Public Participation – Questions from Members of the Public

Question 1: - Submitted by Martine Sommers

How can the MAF consider itself fit for purpose when it supplies a one sided almost utopian view of the barge, without considering the balanced and grown-up concerns of the people of Portland whose views are not met or being ignored. Example being costs of coaches and safety of personnel - i.e. CCTV. We are not interested in almost puerile and childish reports of 'hello's' whilst litter picking, which is a case in point.

Question 2: - Submitted by Kate Robson

Portland Port's & the Home Offices covert, non-consultive, under the table business transition to moor the Bibby Stockholm at Portland Port has probably been the most divisive decision ever made within Weymouth & Portland.

It serves no purpose and has failed to hit any of its objectives. It is NOT more cost effective nor is it a deterrent.

So disgusted with the lack of consultation, imposition and escalating costs. I have submitted my own FOIs to the HO.

- End Date of initial contract.
- Numbers on board
- Cost to date.

I was provided with the following information on the 7th May.

The contract is due to end on the 8th Jan 25'.

As of the end of January were 321 migrants on board.

The running cost paid to only CTM on 3rd April came to an extraordinary 12,900,000. This does not include grants for ancillary / authority service, police, voluntary grant or costs of HO staff.

The CTM contractual value alone equates to over £40K per migrant. Further insight into despicable rising costs is noted in the NAO investigation published 30/3 which determines; at a maximum capacity of 430 over 18 months cost to tax payer is 34.8M. Broken down this is near on 4.5K per month per head. Enough to go on an all-inclusive month-long cruise or rent a flat in Chelsea, or 3 bed house each in Sandbanks.

Hence and with relevance, my questions are around the motion put forward last year on the at DC full meeting on 13th July 'that the barge must be removed at 'the earliest opportunity' as every commentator agrees. I also request that allocation of spend of grants received by Dorset Council from the HO be made public.

1. On the 30th April within the last MAF update, it is stated that:
No decision has yet been made on the future use of the Bibby Stockholm. The Home Office will continue to engage and work collaboratively with Dorset Council, Portland Port and Dorset Police to look at options for lease extension after January 2025'
Please provide insight into these engagements and collaborations. And explain that if no decision has been made on the future use of Bibby Stockholm - why is DC currently recruiting for two full time social workers signposted to work primarily with asylum seekers located on Portland for the next 18 months? In addition, how can a possible extension be substantiated given the cost and failures?

Response to Questions 1 & 2 by Cllr Nick Ireland

The use of the Bibby Stockholm barge to accommodate asylum seekers is not something that was sought or agreed to by the Council.

I have been newly elected as Leader this evening and I am not in a position to answer in any detail questions about how the Council and other agencies are responding together to the new burdens imposed by the Home Office decision.

At its meeting on 13 July 2023 the last Council agreed:

“That the mooring of the barge in Portland Port is an entirely inappropriate location and should be removed at the earliest opportunity”

and

“That Dorset Council, while not the decision makers, will work with agencies to mitigate the impact this will have on Dorset.”

That is still this Council's position.

ANY FUTURE DECISION ABOUT THE USE OF THE BIIBY STOCKHOM IS ONE FOR THE HOME OFFICE AND NOT FOR DORSET COUNCIL. The ultimate solution, and key to the removal of the barge from Portland, is for Government to invest in the Home Office's Asylum process to remove the backlog and enable those who are successful in their application to contribute positively to UK society.

Question 3 – submitted by Edward Lock

In view of the considerable time and resources invested in the last Draft Local Plan by both the Council and the public, will the new Council consider resurrecting that Draft Plan, possibly omitting any of the controversial strategic allocations.

Response to Question 3 by Cllr Nick Ireland

Dorset Council's Local Development Scheme was adopted in March 2024 and this confirms that the Dorset Local Plan will be a new-style local plan prepared under the proposed reforms to the plan-making system. The key stages and likely timescales indicate that a project initiation document will be submitted towards the end of 2024, with consultation and engagement on the visioning and strategy envisaged to follow in May 2025. Whilst it will be a new-style local plan, the preparatory work done to-date will be used to inform the new-style local plan, but at this point in time the Council has not made any decisions about the form or content of the emerging plan.

Whilst the delay to the Local Plan is regrettable, it does give us the opportunity to ensure it includes all the sustainability, climate, environment, carbon neutral and many other policies that we don't have in the current inherited Local Plans.

Question 4 – submitted by Pat Rider

What's DCC thoughts on this way of animal slaughter... I didn't realise that such thing is happening in the UK until recently... Is Dorset halal slaughter free? .. have the people of Dorset been asked about their thoughts on this? Or is this decision made for the people of Dorset without asking?

Question 5 – submitted by Mr & Mrs Caroll

Can members of the New Dorset Council reassure us, the Taxpaying residents of Dorset that, permission will never be granted here for a HALAL SLAUGHTER house within the UNITARY area.

It is believed that some exist, although breaking the Law, in the North of England. This barbaric NON-STUN Islamic method of throat slitting whilst the animal is fully conscious simply cannot and will not be tolerated here in the farming areas of Dorset.

Response to questions 4 & 5 by Cllr Shane Bartlett

In October 2015 the Government published guidance on how to legally carry out slaughter without stunning an animal, where this is necessary in accordance with religious rites. The guidance was updated in June 2023 in line with improvements to the welfare of animals.

The guidance is clear that all animals must be stunned before slaughter unless an animal is being slaughtered in accordance with religious rites.

Dorset Council in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority must consider all planning applications on their individual merits at the time of the application. Any decision needs to be based upon relevant material planning considerations irrespective of whoever the applicant is or what they are proposing.

Annual Meeting of Council

16 May 2024

Questions submitted by Councillors

Question 1 – submitted by Cllr Bill Trite

Since, at the full Council meeting on 13th February, a policy review of street lighting was promised from the Corporate Director for Highways in response to the serious night-time nuisance being caused to Swanage residents by the installation of street lights which are obviously much too harsh, intense and intrusive for the residential roads concerned, how much longer than the present three months will it be necessary to wait for this belated review?

Response by Cllr Jon Andrews

The previous Portfolio Holder for Highways requested that a review of the current street lighting policy be undertaken post-election. I will be asking that this is done as soon as practicable.

There are approximately 100 LED streetlights in Swanage that are affected by the concerns raised by residents. These lights are composites made from the outer shell and lens of the old low-pressure Sodium lights, retrofitted internally with LED lamps. This was done approximately two years ago by the Council's street lighting service provider, because the old Sodium lanterns had exceeded their operational life expectancy and replacement parts were no longer being manufactured. The result is that these lanterns have the light dispersing properties of the previous Sodium lanterns but with the light characteristics of an LED bulb.

These hybrid lights were compliant with all legal requirements at the time they were installed and continue to be so. However, following the advice on best practice that we have received from the Council's Director of Public Health, we have concluded that they should be replaced with the newer type of LED lantern that we are now using elsewhere in the county.

The newer lanterns are designed to direct light downward onto the highway, limiting light spillage outside the bounds of the highway or towards neighbouring properties and residences. This will significantly change the overall appearance of the lighting scheme. The newer lanterns also permit greater use of shields or shrouds to manage the throw of light from each individual lantern.

I have asked for the lanterns to be replaced as swiftly as possible.

Also I have asked the Director of Highways to instigate an independent review of the current Street Lighting operational impacts.'

Question 2 – submitted by Cllr Andrew Parry

The rollout of a large-scale development in the heart of West Parley village, designed to accommodate the business model of a National Housebuilder, working with Planning Officers from Dorset Council, has from the community's perspective been abysmal. It is well documented that this scheme was against the wishes of the residents, West Parley Parish Council, and me as the Ward Councillor. But Officers were so keen to recommend the scheme for approval by the Eastern Planning Committee, that promises were made, including addressing traffic congestion in the area, this would have been one of the few upsides, to an otherwise highly questionable rolling back of greenbelt for development.

However, the area is now plagued by traffic chaos with gridlocks and longer tailbacks at peak times. Reports suggest housing units have been slow to find buyers, housing associations have declined the affordable units, the roads specification are too narrow to meet our adoptable standard, questions about the permanent water capture area, (which will almost certainly attract birds), constructed underneath the flightpath of the nearby Airport, remain unanswered by officers. Other matters that really should be reviewed include the double yellow line fiasco, delays in opening the new Lidl store and existing homeowners in the area, now reporting traffic vibrations inside their properties.

It remains unclear why Officers, were so eager to see this development approved? Locally we have no idea, because they have stopped responding to our requests to meet with us.

Therefore, I am seeking assurance that the new Portfolio Holders, CEO and Place Directors work with the Ward Councillor and Parish Council, to review all concerns and address them.

Response by Cllr Shane Bartlett

Can I thank Cllr Parry for his question. I take the concerns he has raised very seriously and we are aware of the issues in West Parley. I hope he will appreciate I have only just been appointed as Portfolio Holder but I will agree to meet with you and Cllr Andrews, Portfolio Holder for Highways outside of the meeting, with the relevant officers to seek to understand the current situation.

**Full Council
18 July 2024
Agenda item 6 – Petitions and Deputations**

The following petition has reached the threshold of 5,000+ signatures and in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme has been referred to Full Council.

To consider the following petition submitted by Mr Steve Parlour:-

'Stop the Closure of Queen Elizabeth Leisure Centre, Wimborne'

Procedural note for members:-

Extract from the Council's Petition Scheme:-

5.8 Where the petition is referred to a full Council meeting, the petition organiser (or any person authorised by him/her) will, if they so wish, be given a period not exceeding three minutes to present the petition at the meeting.

5.9 The petition will be debated by Members for a period of no more than 15 minutes unless the petition is referred, without debate, to Cabinet, a committee or Sub-committee, Overview or Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

5.10 If debated Members may ask questions of the petition organiser and the petition organiser (or any person authorised by him/her) will be granted a right of reply for a further period not exceeding three minutes at the end of the debate and before a final decision or vote is taken.

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Full Council
18 July 2024
Agenda item 6 – Petitions and Deputations

**Briefing note for Full Council: Queen Elizabeth Leisure Centre
Withdrawal**

QE Leisure Centre is under the ownership of QE School Foundation Trust. The Council had managed the facilities since 1987 under a dual use management agreement which set out arrangements for school and community use, amongst other things. The Council could withdraw from the agreement at any stage provided it gave QE School Foundation Trust notice of 2 years. Dorset Council did not provide direct funding to QE School but met the revenue deficit of the community use each year. Since 2019, Dorset Council subsidised the leisure centre facilities at QELC by £2,979,591 with an average annual subsidy of £596k net. This annual spend equated to around a third of the overall leisure centres budget which was higher than for other leisure centres owned by the Council. In September 2021 the Council undertook a public consultation to consider the impacts if they chose to withdraw from the agreement. One of the main factors considered was the already good level of leisure provision with 8 alternative public centres within a 10-mile radius.

On 01 March 2022 Cabinet took the following decisions:

1. That the Executive Director of Place is instructed to write to Queen Elizabeth School Foundation Trustees to give formal notice to withdraw from the dual use management agreement on the 31.3.24.
2. That officers continue to engage with the school during this transitional period and work with them to approach the Education and Skills Funding Agency to apply for exceptional circumstances funding in recognition of the change in contractual arrangements.
3. That officers work alongside Queen Elizabeth School in identifying ways to maximise the availability of leisure facilities for school and community use and provide advice to any displaced users who may need assistance in identifying opportunities to maintain their activity levels.
4. That a bid for one off capital funding (up to a max of £150,000) should be included in Dorset Councils 2023/24 capital budget process. If successful, this funding would be Dorset Council's contribution towards the replacement of the All-Weather Pitch.

The period of notice meant that QE school had two years to find a new operator or arrange to manage the facilities directly themselves. They were unable to find another operator so have opted to manage the site under a different operating model. The facilities will continue to be utilised by the school during the school day and made available to hire by clubs and organisations on evenings and weekends. So, whilst the school is no longer offering a full leisure service, they are still making some facilities available to community groups.

QES is currently in receipt of Exceptional Factor Funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This is for exceptional circumstances relating to school premises, in this instance for joint-use sports facilities. Dorset Council made the application for Exceptional Factor Funding securing £296k for 24/25. However, current proposals from the Department of Education are to reduce all funding to nil from 2025 and this is likely to have an impact on all dual use facilities in the future. Therefore, the future subsidy at QELC could be in excess of £850K.

In summary, Dorset Council's decision was to withdraw from the management agreement and, QE School Foundation Trust took the decision on how it would operate its own leisure facilities after 01.04.24.

Ken Buchan – Head of Environment and Wellbeing

**Full Council
18 July 2024
Agenda item 6 – Petitions and Deputations**

To consider the following deputation submitted by Stand Up to Racism Dorset.

Deputation Leader: - Elaine White, to be accompanied by Candy Udwin, Lucy Hardwicke, Sally Davidson and Giovanna Lewis

Statement for Deputation: -

It is now over a year since the announcement that the Bibby Stockholm barge would be used in Portland Port to house up to 500 people seeking asylum. This announcement was made without consultation with Dorset Council and was opposed by them.

Since then

- Dorset council received the first 25% of the funding from the Home Office amounting to £437.5k on 1st November 2023.
- Dorset council received a one off sum of £377000 for the Voluntary and Community Sector in relation to the barge.

OUR CONCERNS AND PROPOSALS

1. THE BIBBY STOCKHOLM IS NOT A SUITABLE OR HUMANE PLACE TO HOUSE REFUGEES SEEKING ASYLUM

See the Inquiry Report produced by Care4Calais, Stand Up To Racism Dorset and Portland Global Friendship Group which details the serious impact that the security, segregation and other aspects of barge life has on the residents. <https://care4calais.org/bibby-report>. This impact has only worsened since the number of residents has recently increased to over 400.

We remember Leonard Farruku who took his own life on the barge in December, and believe that all steps should be taken to prevent such a tragedy happening again.

PROPOSAL ONE

Dorset Council should continue to call for an end to the use of the Bibby Stockholm at Portland Port.

Specifically, the Council should:

- a) Insist that it is consulted before any extension to the original 18 month contract.
- b) Consider how to take any possible steps to end the barge's use.

2. THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES PROVIDED FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

We understand that some of the £437.5k so far received by the Council from the Home Office has been spent on staff costs and additional security.

Additional funding for GP provision has been provided to the NHS for a GP practice in Bournemouth.

PROPOSAL TWO

The Council should:

- a) Use the funding provided by the Home Office, which could total up to £1.75 million, to benefit local residents as well as those on the barge, which would help integration and break down barriers. One example would be by providing community or sports facilities that could be used by all.
- b) Support the campaign to fully reopen Portland hospital with services for local residents as well as those on the Bibby Stockholm.

3. SUPPORT FOR BARGE RESIDENTS IS INADEQUATE

A Community Liaison Coordinator has now been appointed by the Council and this has led to some increase in the support and activity being organised by the Council. However there are still huge gaps in the provision which Portland Global Friendship Group (PGFG an entirely voluntary group set up on the Island a year ago, without any funding support from the Council) has been trying to fill.

ACTIVITIES & INTEGRATION

PGFG provides the majority of English lessons, conversation clubs, volunteering opportunities, sporting cultural and social activities available to the residents.

CLOTHING, SHOES & OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The Council originally planned to commission a charity to run a "Dignity Shop" to provide the residents with clothing, shoes and toiletries. We understand this did not proceed because of problems with finding a venue.

This means PGFG has had to provide the residents with these through donations, crowdfunding and some support from charities. We have also been providing Sim cards, and second hand phones since the provision of laptops on the barge is completely inadequate and the wifi often does not work. This is done through entirely voluntary effort without the provision from the council of either funding or venues, often using people's own homes for storage of items. We are unwilling to see residents who do not have a jacket or shoes go needy, but especially with the increased number and turnover of residents on the barge, we are no longer able to meet everyone's needs.

OTHER SUPPORT

There is also a huge need for support with dealing with various practical tasks and form filling, registering to work, hospital appointments etc. We have tried to organise this. There is no current plan from the council to provide such support.

PROPOSAL THREE

The Council should urgently reinstate the plan to commission the provision of clothing, toiletries and other items, as well as consider how other support required is provided.

4. INCREASE IN RACIAL TENSION IN WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND

At the time of the Bibby Stockholm's arrival in Portland last year, there was a large amount of ignorance and fear about its impact locally. This was fuelled by the language used by the government at the time, by some individuals locally, and by visits from right wing groups from out of Dorset such as the Patriotic Alternative. During last summer, attempts to organise local people against refugees with slogans such as "stop the invasion" reached their height.

Stand Up To Racism Dorset held public meetings, demonstrations, street stalls and other events to argue that the barge was not right for asylum seekers or local people, but that the refugees were not to blame and should be welcomed. Any racist statements were publicly called out. Portland Global Friendship Group was formed and organised public welcomes for the refugees when they arrived. Overall, this led to the organised public opposition to the refugees largely subsiding or becoming more hidden.

However, there is still a huge amount of misinformation, and sometimes open hatred, shared about the Bibby residents both online and in the community. This includes the lies that Bibby residents have harassed local children (confirmed by the police not to be true), or that they have harassed, or even raped or murdered local women (again with absolutely no substance). Volunteers who support the refugees have been abused on-line and in person. This has led to the arrest of one Portland resident for harassment. There is now a situation where racism towards local people of colour has increased, and the refugees could be put at risk if tensions escalated.

We believe this situation requires education and community integration, not increased security. Bibby residents have been to visit and speak in some local community, education, religious and workplace settings. Community events or activities which bring people together break down barriers and undercut stereotypes.

PROPOSAL FOUR

Dorset Council should urgently consider a public campaign to welcome refugees (this should include all those in the area, not just on the Bibby stockholm). This could include an education program for local community organisations, schools and others, as well as public rebuttals of some of the misinformation that is circulated.

Procedural note for members:-

Extract from the Council's Procedural Rules:-

10.10 Presenting a deputation at the meeting

(a) The Chair will invite the Deputation Leader to read out any statement/explanation given as part of the details of the deputation or a summary of it. If the Deputation Leader who has submitted the deputation is unable to be present, the Chair may invite another person on the deputation to read it out.

(b) A statement/explanation read out about a deputation shall not exceed five minutes unless the Chair expressly allows.

10.11 Discussion about a deputation

Unless the Chair decides otherwise, no discussion will take place about any deputation presented pursuant to these procedure rules.

10.12 Replying to a deputation

Any person identified as being the person who will reply to a deputation may reply in such matter as s/he considers appropriate.

Dorset Council

18 July 2024

Adoption of Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr. S Bartlett, Planning and Emergency Planning

Local Councillor(s):

All Cllrs

Executive Director:

Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

Report Author: Sue Bellamy
Job Title: Senior Planning Policy Officer
Tel: 01929 557303
Email: sue.bellamy@dorsetcouncil.co.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034) [PLP 2018] will provide the framework for planning decisions in the Purbeck area. The plan was submitted 28 January 2019 to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate for examination shortly before Dorset Council was established. Submission of the plan for examination was supported by the shadow Dorset Council. Progress towards adoption has been lengthy. The Inspectors for the plan have found the plan legally compliant and sound. It is therefore now capable of being adopted as part of the development plan for the Purbeck area.

The plan will provide the framework for making decisions on planning applications in the Purbeck area until the emerging Dorset Local Plan is adopted. It contains a vision for the Purbeck area, establishes policies for managing development in the area and allocates sites to meet the housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities.

Recommendation:

Council adopts the Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034) as part of the development plan for the Purbeck area.

Reason for Recommendation:

PLP 2018 contributes to at least 3 of the council's strategic priorities. Primarily the Plan seeks to deliver sustainable development and housing through housing allocations and other policies to manage any impact associated with the delivery of development. The Plan contributes to driving economic prosperity through the safeguarding of key employment sites and enabling growth. It includes a number of policies for protecting our natural environment, climate and ecology, such as those related to the protecting valuable habitats and species through applying the principles of avoiding harm, mitigating for unavoidable harm and, as a last resort, compensating for their loss. It also includes policies that encourage appropriate renewable energy and measures to avoid areas of high flood risk and measures to reduce the risk of flooding. The plan aims to meet a range of housing needs and providing additional open space through mitigation projects to avoid impacts on protected habitats and species and contribute to creating stronger and healthier communities.

An adopted PLP 2018 will release land for planned housing development and help meet Purbeck's and therefore Dorset's identified housing need. Without the land being released for development Purbeck, and more widely Dorset, is likely to fail to meet its housing delivery targets and continue to be open to the presumption of sustainable development, where the location of development will become developer led and not local plan led.

1. Report

- 1.1 The Purbeck Local Plan sets out the Council's planning framework and identifies how the area will grow and develop to meet the areas future needs for homes, employment space and associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The plan sets out the approach to development and detailed policies for the area up to 2034 and consists of a written statement (the document) and a [policies map](#). It is based on [evidence and the results of consultations](#) undertaken in 2015, 2016 and 2018 prior to the Council submitting the plan for examination. Additional evidence was submitted during the examination and consultations were undertaken on [modifications](#) to policies in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2023.

- 1.3 Since the main modifications consultation, additional work has been required to address issues related to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Habitats Regulations).

The vision

- 1.4 The Purbeck Local Plan aims to protect the distinctive environment whilst improving the life of the local community. Housing will be spread across the plan area with the majority in the less constrained areas to the west of the area. The majority of new development – housing, employment, shops, services and community facilities will be delivered in accordance with the settlement hierarchy (mainly towns and key service villages), where growth will be appropriate for the size, character and range of facilities at settlements. Limited developments that are sympathetic to their surroundings will also be supported elsewhere across the plan area.

Environment

- 1.5 The policies in the plan protect Purbeck's distinctive and highly designated environment. The plan sets out policies for protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, as well as improving resilience to climate change and mitigating flood risk.

Housing

- 1.6 The plan sets out the housing need for the area. There is a need to build 186 new homes per year, totalling 2,976 across the plan period (2018-2034). Larger sites are allocated in the plan at Upton, Lytchett Matravers, Wool and Moreton Station/Redbridge which will provide 1,200 dwellings and 130 extra care units in total. The remaining dwellings will be provided through neighbourhood plans, a small sites policy and windfall.
- 1.7 In addition to providing dwellings for older people, the plan establishes a need to provide accessible and adaptable homes through major planning applications.
- 1.8 Delivery of affordable homes will be through a 20% financial contribution from minor sites (2-9 homes). For major sites (10 or more homes) a target of 40% of the homes to be delivered as affordable homes on-site for greenfield applications and 30% on-site for brownfield applications. Affordable housing delivery is subject to site viability considerations.

- 1.9 The plan restricts the use of new homes as a principal residence or holiday let for business purposes only in an attempt to reduce the number of homes being bought as second homes.

Local economy

- 1.10 The focus for economic development is on increasing the number and range of knowledge economy jobs, building on the area's strengths in advanced engineering and manufacturing employment, to support increased wage levels and help address housing affordability in the area.
- 1.11 Policies safeguard existing employment sites and identify 46.1 hectares of available employment land including the strategic sites at Dorset Innovation Park and Holton Heath.
- 1.12 Town centre vibrancy will be protected through focussing new town centre uses in town and local centres following the settlement hierarchy. They will be protected through requiring robust evidence to support any proposed change of use away from town centre uses and/or out-of-town centre development.
- 1.13 New convenience retail is allocated as part of allocations H4 (Moreton Station/Redbridge) and H5 (Wool).
- 1.14 The plan supports tourist development of a scale, type and appearance appropriate to the locality, that provides local economic benefits and follows the settlement hierarchy. It permits specific uses outside settlement boundaries and allows change of use if supported by robust evidence that the use is no longer viable, will not impact on protected habitats and/or is of limited scale.

Community Facilities/Infrastructure

- 1.15 The plan identifies how development will provide and/or support community facilities including whether it be directly as part of the development or through financial contributions where the council or other organisation will deliver new/improved facilities/services, e.g, by provision of new green space or recreational facilities, contributions to extended GP services or school provision.

Local Plan Policies Maps

1.16 The policies map shows the main policy designations, such as green belt, housing allocations, employment areas, environmental designations and assets, conservation areas and open spaces.

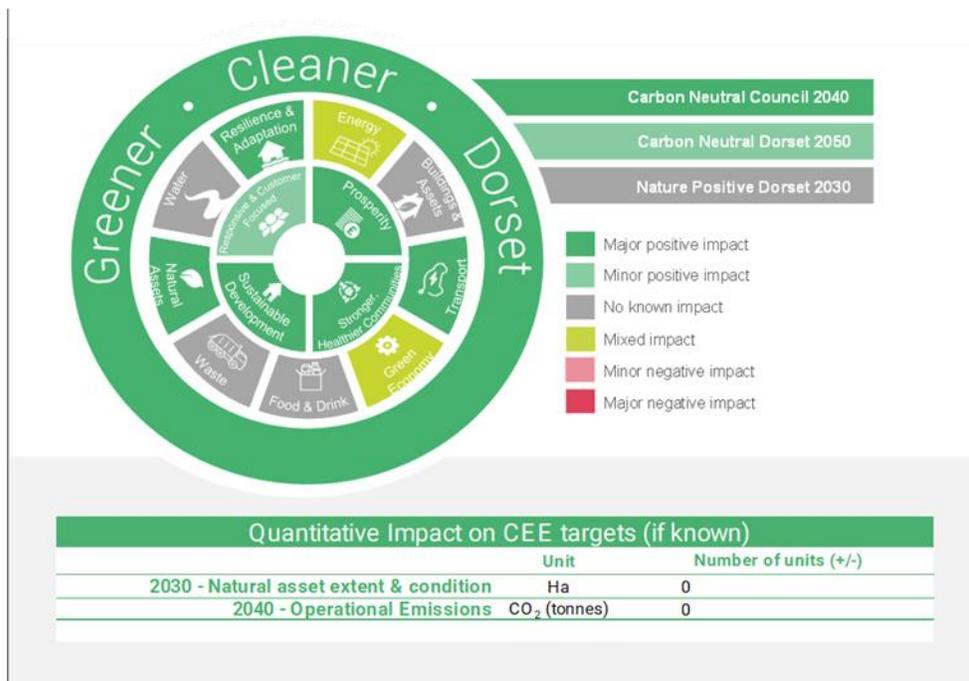
2. Financial Implications

2.1 New housing and employment sites will bring in additional revenue through council tax but also provide funds through planning obligations including Community Infrastructure Levy and/or Section 106 Agreements.

2.2 New housing will support the new homes bonus. The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. It is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new-build homes, conversions and long-term empty homes brought back into use. There is also an extra payment for providing affordable homes.

3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

3.1 Full results of the climate wheel are attached at Appendix 3.



- 3.2 The Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate prior to local government review in 2019 but supports the corporate plan aims around prosperity, stronger healthier communities and sustainable development and housing.
- 3.3 No changes are proposed as most of the recommendations do not fall with the role of the local plan. The detailed recommendations for energy fall within the purview of Building Regulations which are constantly reviewed and updated. The policies within the plan encourage improved design and renewable energy without being specific. The local plan promotes sustainable patterns of development across the Purbeck area and provides significant protection for protected habitats and species.
- 3.4 The wheel indicates major positive impacts on transport, natural assets and ecology and resilience and adaptation.
- 3.5 The development strategies, policies and site allocations of the plan have been assessed against the following economic, social and environmental objectives in the Sustainability Appraisal as they have developed through the plan making process:
- (i) Meet as much of Purbeck's housing need as possible;
 - (ii) Promote services and facilities where need is identified;
 - (iii) Harness the economic potential of tourism and widen employment opportunities;
 - (iv) Help everyone access basic services, reduce the need to travel by car and encourage cycling, walking and use of public transport;
 - (v) Reduce vulnerability to flooding and coastal change and adapt to climatic changes;
 - (vi) Protect and enhance habitats and species and local geodiversity;
 - (vii) Protect and enhance Purbeck's unique landscape and townscape, and cultural and historical assets; and
 - (viii) Minimise all forms of pollution and consumption of natural resources.
- 3.6 The potential impact of each strategy, draft policy and site allocation on the agreed objectives listed above is assessed at each stage of

development of the plan and policies and, if appropriate, changes made or mitigation identified.

3.7 Where appropriate mitigation is identified this has informed the strategies, final policies and site allocation details. All versions of the SA are available on the website: **Purbeck Local Plan Submission** and Dorset Council, Purbeck Local Plan - **modifications** - Dorset Council.

3.8 As well as the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment is carried out at all stages of the development of the local plan. Likely significant effects are assessed for impact on protected habitat sites (comprising Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area & Ramsar) including :

- Increased recreational pressure and other urban effects,
- Water abstraction,
- Water quality,
- Fragmentation, and
- Air quality.

3.9 At Pre-submission the **HRA** concluded that ‘the Purbeck Local Plan is in conformity with the Habitats Regulations, and at a plan level a conclusion of no adverse effects on European site integrity can be drawn’. The HRA has been updated at additional stages through the examination, e.g. post hearing and the various sets of modifications. The most [recent HRA](#) addendum states:

‘The Purbeck Local Plan comprising proposed Main Modifications and further proposed Main Modifications was subjected to an appropriate assessment and integrity test according to the statutory provisions laid out in the Habitats Regulations 2017 as amended. That HRA concluded that, at a plan level, a conclusion of no adverse effects, alone or in-combination, on European site integrity could be drawn.

This addendum updates the previous findings in light of the proposed SMM and a conclusion of no adverse effects, alone or in-combination, on the integrity of any European sites can be drawn.’

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

- 4.1 A [Health Impact Assessment](#) of the policies in the plan was published at the time of submission for examination.

Each policy option was subject to assessment in relation to health issues informed by the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Strategy and wider principles for planning for healthy living environments, including:

Strong, vibrant and healthy communities;

Opportunities for physical activity as part of daily life;

Places to support community engagement;

Social and cultural well-being;

Reducing health inequalities; and

Promoting healthy lifestyles.

- 4.2 Most proposed policies are compatible. The main equality issue is the impact of policies on rural isolation. However, the spatial strategy does not focus growth in the rural areas and therefore does not make this situation worse. Looking at health impacts there is a known conflict between recreation and biodiversity. However, there should be sufficient opportunity to increase access to physical activity without a detrimental impact upon designated areas, e.g. through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.
- 4.3 It is also important to note that neighbourhood plans and the Swanage Local Plan address issues at the more local level.
- 4.4 At the time of submission of the plan for examination it was planned to consider the accommodation needs of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople community through a jointly produced development plan document. Provision of accommodation has therefore not been considered as part of the Purbeck Local Plan. The joint development plan document has now been superseded by work on the developing Dorset Council Local Plan.

5. **Other Implications**

There are no further implications.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The current adopted local plan for the Purbeck area, Purbeck Local Plan Part 1(PLP1) is significantly out-of-date, with most of the dwellings on allocated housing sites having been built. The council is not currently able to identify a 5-year housing land supply in this part of Dorset and housing delivery also falls below government targets. This means that Purbeck area is currently open to developer-led planning applications which are not consistent with PLP1 development strategy through the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Adoption will address this issue.
- 6.2 A lack of supply, means that delivery can't keep pace with housing targets and is likely to result in speculative applications from developers. Adopting the plan will increase the supply of housing and reduce the risk of speculative applications.
- 6.3 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risk associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: High

Residual Risk: Med-Low

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The policies in the draft PLP were [assessed](#) prior to submitting the plan for examination. The assessment concluded that:

'The Plan seeks to promote accessibility and connectivity to housing, employment, education and leisure facilities throughout the District. Specialist groups are supported through policy requirements, ensuring that an appropriate mix of housing and accommodation types is provided to meet the needs of all residents. This includes support for proposals for housing specifically designed to meet the identified needs of older people, specialist accommodation and self-build/custom build housing.

The Plan demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to equality, promoting cohesive communities in the area through area specific policy. Chapters 5 and 6 of the Plan and the spatial strategy highlight the support for diverse interconnected communities, identifying socio-economic objectives at the strategic and local level. This will maximise infrastructure delivery and employment opportunities in areas of lower economic status,

contributing towards addressing pockets of deprivation. Taking this into consideration, it is appropriate to conclude that the Submission Plan would have significant positive long-term effects.

The aspirations set out within the Purbeck Local Plan's vision, objectives and Policy V1 (Spatial strategy for sustainable communities) will also contribute towards reducing health inequalities in the District.'

- 7.2 Further assessments were carried out on the consultation process to accompany [main modifications](#) and [supplementary main modifications](#) consultations.
- 7.3 The council has followed the consultation process around local plans as set out in legislation. Whilst the council has moved its focus to electronic consultation methods which may benefit the majority of consultees, the planning policy team has acknowledged that it may not suit everyone and have continued to place paper copies in libraries and the main office and provided paper response forms as an alternative to engaging with Citizen Space. It has also provided one on one advice from officers by telephone to those who need additional guidance or assistance.
- 7.4 The [EqIA](#) assessment was revisited as part of the final adoption process.

8. **Appendices**

- 1 [Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034](#)
- 2 [Purbeck policies map](#)
- 3 Climate Wheel Recommendations

9. **Background Papers**

Links to

[Submission documents online](#)

[Examination page online](#)

[Modifications documents](#)

10. **Report Sign Off**

- 10.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the cabinet member for Planning and Emergency Planning.

Appendix 3 - Climate Wheel

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendations	Responses - will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?
Energy	
Provide advice and/or signpost business to sources of information on how they can become more resource efficient	No changes proposed to the plan. It is not the role of a local plan to provide advice or signpost businesses. The council publishes a sustainability statement and checklist for planning application and interim guidance on planning for climate change.
consider opportunities to generate renewable energy on the land	No changes proposed to the plan. The land allocated or safeguarded in the plan is for specific purposes - either for residential or employment development or as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). SANG is not appropriate for renewable energy schemes. Policy E3 encourages the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy provided any adverse impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.
Buildings & Assets	
No recommendations found for this category	
Transport	
No recommendations found for this category	
Green Economy	
No recommendations found for this category	
Food & Drink	
No recommendations found for this category	
Waste	
No recommendations found for this category	
Natural Assets & Ecology	
No recommendations found for this category	
Water	
No recommendations found for this category	
Resilience & Adaptation	
No recommendations found for this category	

Recommendation to Dorset Council 18 July 2024

From Cabinet on 9 July 2024

Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr. C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director:

T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

Report Author: David Webb

Title: Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service

Tel: 01202 794321

Email: david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

That the Youth Justice Plan 2024/25 be approved.

Reason for recommendation:

Youth Justice Services are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Justice Service. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service works across both Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. Approval is therefore sought from both Dorset Council and from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Appendices

Report to the People and Health Overview Committee on 13 June 2024, which included the following appendix:

Appendix 1 – Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

Background papers

[Minutes of the People and Health Overview Committee held on 13 June 2024.](#)

[Agenda and Minutes for Cabinet on Tuesday, 9th July, 2024, 6.30 pm - Dorset Council](#)

People and Health Overview Committee

13 June 2024

Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

Local Councillor(s):

All

Executive Director:

T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

Report Author: David Webb
Job Title: Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
Tel: 01202 794321
Email: david.webb@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) sets out a statutory requirement for local authority youth offending teams to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. This report summarises the Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25, with a copy of the plan appended. The Youth Justice Plan needs to be approved by the full Council.

Recommendation:

For the Overview Committee to endorse the Youth Justice Plan so that Cabinet can recommend its approval to Full Council.

Reason for Recommendation:

Youth Justice Services are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Justice Service. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service works across both Bournemouth,

Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. Approval is therefore sought from both Dorset Council and from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

1. **Report**

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) requires Youth Offending Teams (now more widely known as Youth Justice Services) to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan. The Youth Justice Board provides detailed and prescriptive guidance about what must be included in the Plan. The draft Youth Justice Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is attached at Appendix One. A brief summary of the Youth Justice Plan is provided in this report.
- 1.2 The Youth Justice Plan provides information on the resourcing, structure, governance, partnership arrangements and performance of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service. The Plan also describes the national and local youth justice context for 2024/25 and sets out our priorities for this year.
- 1.3 Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service was rated 'Good' in its most recent inspection report, which was published in January 2023. An action plan was produced, in response to the inspection recommendations. All actions have been completed, with the exception of ongoing partnership work to establish new arrangements and procedures for working with children who experience harm outside the home. The new Extra-Familial Harm working arrangements are well developed and will be completed during 2024.
- 1.4 The Youth Justice Board continues to publish data for three 'key performance indicators' for youth justice. National performance data is published as a combined figure for the two local authorities within the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service partnership.
- 1.5 The first indicator relates to the rate of young people entering the justice system for the first time. Overall local performance in this area, across both local authorities, improved significantly in the past year. The latest national data, relating to the 12 months to December 2023, shows a combined pan-Dorset rate of 161 per 100,000 10 to 17 year-olds entering the justice system for the first time. This represents a 30% reduction on the previous year, when the rate was 229 per 100,000 10 to 17 year-olds

in the previous year. For context, the local rate for the year 2019/20, before the pandemic, was 309 per 100,000 10 to 17 year-olds.

- 1.6 Data on the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) case management system enables us to monitor numbers of first-time entrants in each local authority area. This local data shows a mixed picture for 2023/24, with an increase in the number of Dorset Council first-time entrants offset by a reduction in the number of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole children entering the justice system. A total of 56 Dorset children received a formal justice outcome for the first time in 2023/24, compared to 39 children in 2022/23. Closer analysis indicates that delays in dealing with offences committed in 2022/23 led to some Dorset Council children receiving their justice outcome in 2023/24. The total number of first-time entrants for Dorset Council across these two years is consistent with the numbers in the previous two years. The Youth Justice Plan provides more detail about the children who enter the justice system and about work to divert children from the youth justice system, including local implementation of the Ministry of Justice 'Turnaround' programme.
- 1.7 The other two national indicators relate to reducing reoffending and minimising the use of custodial sentences. The reoffending rate fluctuates, partly because of the current counting rules for this measure. Our local reoffending rate has for the most part remained close to the national rate. Local analysis, summarised in the Youth Justice Plan, shows some of the patterns underlying the reoffending data. The Youth Justice Plan sets out some of the actions that have been taken and future plans to address these issues.
- 1.8 DCYJS has low rates of custodial sentences, below the national average. Young people who are sentenced to custody have often experienced significant trauma in their earlier life, affecting their current behaviour. Analysis in the Youth Justice Plan shows some of the common characteristics of the children who have been sentenced to custody.
- 1.9 Although the numbers remanded or sentenced to custody are low, these outcomes usually reflect serious offences causing significant harm to victims. Reducing youth violence, and harm to victims, is a priority for the Youth Justice Service and for other local strategic partnerships, such as the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. In 2023 the government introduced the Serious Violence Duty, which requires specified local partners, including youth offending teams, to work together to share information and target interventions to

prevent and reduce serious violence. Local implementation of the Serious Violence Duty is coordinated by the Community Safety Partnership.

- 1.10 One of the priorities for the Youth Justice Service, in reducing youth violence, and other offending, is to work with the Police and CPS to speed up investigations and outcomes for alleged offences by children. Delays in bringing cases to court can make it harder to support children into more positive behaviour and to repair the harm caused to victims. Other activities include work by the YJS Nurses, Psychologist and Speech and Language Therapists to identify children's communication needs and trauma histories, to help us to understand the child's behaviour and to respond to their individual needs.
- 1.11 The Youth Justice Service Partnership priorities for 2024/25 align with the strategic priorities of other services and partnerships, including the Community Safety Partnership and the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership. More work is planned to divert children from the justice system and to ensure their needs are identified and met, using the Ministry of Justice 'Turnaround' programme; further work will be undertaken to improve the education outcomes of children in the youth justice system; additional action will be taken to address risks of some groups of children being over-represented in the youth justice system. The Youth Justice Plan also outlines plans for a project to identify and support the speech, language and communication needs of children who are at risk of school exclusion. This project will commence in June 2024, aimed at reducing school exclusions and thereby reducing the risk of future offending.

2. **Financial Implications**

The Youth Justice Plan reports on the resourcing of the Youth Justice Service. Like all local authority services, the YJS is subject to significant resource pressures. Although there was an increase in the national Youth Justice Grant in 2023/24, taking it to £764,718, this did not restore it to the allocation of £790,000 in 2014/15. At the time of writing this report, in late April, the Youth Justice Grant allocation for 2024/25 has not yet been announced.

The creation of the pan-Dorset youth offending service in 2015 increased the service's resilience and ability to adapt to reduced funding and increased costs. The management of vacancies, and the deletion of some posts, enabled a balanced budget to be achieved in the years to 2023. Budget pressures from pay awards, without a corresponding increase in

budget contributions, means that staffing costs will be reviewed in 2024/25.

3. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

No adverse environmental impact has been identified. The Covid-19 pandemic led to changes in the working arrangements of the Youth Justice Service. These changes included significant reductions in staff travel, both to and from work and to visit service users, with more activities being carried out remotely. Although staff travel has increased, with the return to more face-to-face work, team members continue to undertake some tasks remotely.

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

Young people in contact with youth justice services are known to be more likely than other young people to have unmet or unidentified health needs. The Youth Justice Service includes seconded health workers who work directly with young people and who facilitate their engagement with community health services.

5. **Other Implications**

No Human Resources implications have been identified. Local Authority YJS staff members are employees of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole council, including those team members who work in the Dorset Council area. The YJS also includes employees of the partner agencies who have been seconded to work in the team and who remain employed by the partner agency. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 contains statutory requirements for the staffing composition of youth offending services. The Youth Justice Plan shows how Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service meets these requirements.

6. **Risk Assessment**

6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low
Residual Risk: Low.

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The Youth Justice Plan does not relate to a new strategy, policy or function so an Equalities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

Some information about equalities issues is included in the report. No adverse equalities impacts have been identified.

It is recognised nationally that young people with diverse heritage, and young people in the care of the local authority, are over-represented in the youth justice system and particularly in the youth custodial population. It is also recognised that young people known to the YJS may experience learning difficulties or disabilities, including in respect of speech, language and communication needs. Information from Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service records, summarised in the Youth Justice Plan, shows that some of these issues of over-representation also apply in our area. Actions have been identified in the Youth Justice Plan to address these issues.

8. **Appendices**

Appendix One: Youth Justice Plan 2024/25.

9. **Background Papers**

None.

10. **Report Sign Off**

11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

 D O R S E T
 C O M B I N E D
 Youth Justice Service



Service	Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
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YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2024/25

Head of Service	David Webb
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Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

1. Executive Summary

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) works across the Dorset Council and BCP Council areas in a multi-agency partnership between the local authorities, Dorset Police, NHS Dorset and the Probation Service.

DCYJS helps children to make positive changes, keeping them safe, keeping other people safe, and repairing the harm caused to victims. When possible, we do this work outside the formal justice system, to avoid criminalising the child.

During the past year, DCYJS has made progress on our partnership priorities, including:

Keeping children out of the formal justice system: the number of children across Dorset and BCP who received a first caution or court order dropped from 118 in 2022/23 to 108 in 2023/24. There was a notable reduction this year in the BCP area (down from 79 to 52).

Reducing over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system: local children from ethnic minorities are not over-represented among those entering the justice system but may progress further through the system. Children in Care and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are over-represented locally and nationally. Action is being taken to reduce over-representation of these groups.

Reducing youth violence and child exploitation: there was a slight reduction in the number of children receiving justice outcomes for violent offences in 2023/24, compared to the previous year. The number of children being arrested locally has dropped in the past two years.

Improve education outcomes for children in the justice system: DCYJS worked with Upton Country Park to provide a project supporting young people to become ready for college or employment.

DCYJS applies the 'Child First' principles that are promoted by the Youth Justice Board. A parent said that 'The YJS worker was really empathic. My son felt heard and listened to.....he's just got an apprenticeship....we wouldn't change anything about the service we received'.

The DCYJS Partnership Strategic Priorities for 2024/25 include:

- Continuing to divert children from the formal justice system.
- Reducing over-representation of minority groups.
- Improving education outcomes.
- Earlier identification of speech, language and communication needs for children at risk of school exclusion.
- Developing restorative responses to offences without a direct victim, such as possession of drugs or weapons, to help children understand the impact on the community.

2. Introduction, vision, strategy, and local context

Foreword

This document is the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) for 2024/25. It sets out the key priorities and targets for the service for the next 12 months as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. This Plan adheres to the Youth Justice Board's document 'Youth Justice Plans: Guidance for Youth Justice Services'.

This Plan has been developed under the direction and oversight of the DCYJS Partnership Board, alongside consultation with DCYJS staff and taking into account feedback from DCYJS users.

The Youth Justice Strategic Plan:

- summarises the DCYJS structure, governance and partnership arrangements.
- outlines the resources available to the DCYJS.
- reviews achievements and developments during 2023/24.
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities.
- sets out our priorities and actions for improving youth justice outcomes this year.

*Theresa Leavy, Executive Director People – Children, Dorset Council
Chair, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Partnership Board.*

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service Statement of Purpose

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

We support the national Youth Justice Board Vision for a 'child first' youth justice system:

A youth justice system that sees children as children, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. This will prevent offending and create safer communities with fewer victims.

Who We Are and What We Do

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a statutory partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Dorset Police, The Probation Service (Dorset) and NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board.

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

More information about the Youth Justice Service (YJS) partnership and the members of the YJS team is provided later in this document.

The team works with children 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 with parents and carers to help them support their children to make changes.

We contact all victims of crimes committed by the children 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 YJS partnership also work together to prevent children entering the youth justice system, to improve the quality of our local youth justice system and to ensure that young people who work with the YJS can access the specialist support they need for their care, health and education.

The combination of direct work with children, parents and victims and work to improve our local youth justice and children's services systems enables us to meet our strategic objectives to:

- 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.
- Reduce and repair the harm caused to victims and the community.
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

Local Context

Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service (DCYJS) is a partnership working across two local authorities: Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Dorset Council covers a large geographical, predominantly rural area with market towns and a larger urban area in Weymouth and Portland. Dorset Council has a population of about 380,000.

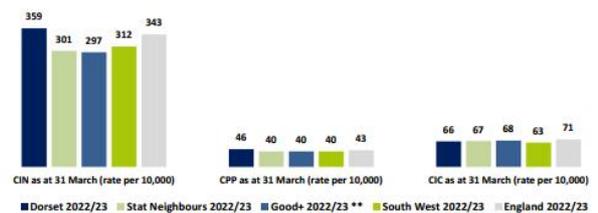
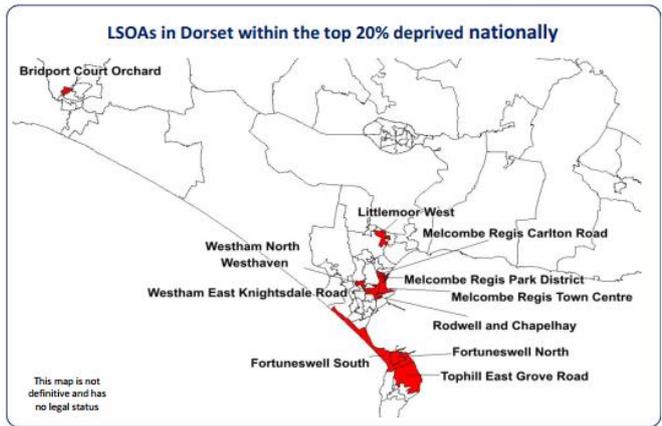
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together form a conurbation with a population of 400,000.

Other members of the DCYJS Partnership, such as Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, NHS Dorset CCG, Dorset HealthCare Trust and the Probation Service (Dorset) also work across both local authorities.

The following tables provide demographic information about young people in both local authorities:



Population	Age 10-17
Number of Children ¹	33,287
Male ¹	51%
Female ¹	49%
Pupils eligible for Free School Meals ²	21.3%
Pupils with SEN Support ²	14.4%
Pupils with an EHC Plan ²	6.2%
Pupils from Non-white Minority Ethnic groups ³	5.1%
25% children living in Poverty after housing costs ⁴	
Safeguarding	Age 10-17
Number of Children in Need ⁵	597
Male ⁵	51.4%
Female ⁵	48.2%
Indeterminate ⁵	0.6%
Number of Children with a Child Protection Plan ⁷	111
Number of Children in Care ⁶	314
Male ⁶	61.9%
Female ⁶	38.7%
Indeterminate ⁶	0%
Number of children and young people at risk of exploitation ⁷	
Significant	16
Moderate	36



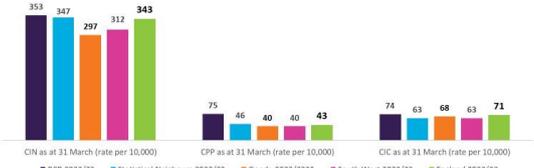
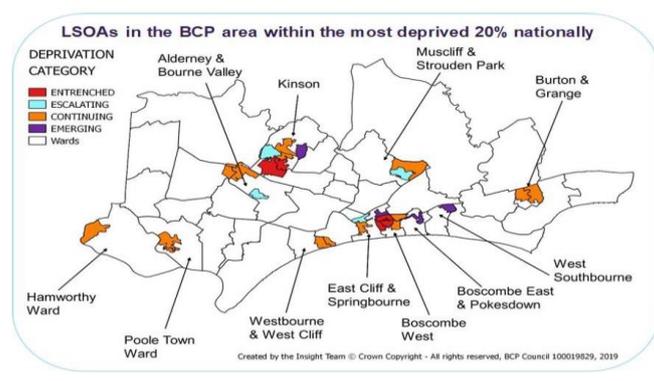
1. Dorset mid-year 2022 population estimates (published November 2023).
 2. October 2023 School Census (includes all pupils at a Dorset School aged 10-17; ages as at 31 August 2023).
 3. January 2023 School Census (all non-white pupils at a Dorset School, excluding 'Refused' and 'Information not yet obtained').
 4. Local child poverty indicators 2021/22. Based on the DWP/HMRC statistics 'Children in low income families: local area statistics' (March 2023).
 5. From MOSAIC, as at 29 February 2024. Excluding CP and CIC. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
 6. From MOSAIC, as at 29 February 2024. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
 7. From MOSAIC as at 29 February 2024.

** Good+ Local Authorities are: Cornwall, East Sussex, Norfolk, Shropshire, Somerset, Suffolk, Wiltshire and Worcestershire

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole



Population ¹ :	Age 10-17
Number of Children ¹	34,372
Male ¹	52%
Female ¹	48%
Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals ²	19.9%
Pupils with SEN Support ²	14.5%
Pupils with an EHC Plan ²	4.8%
Pupils from Nonwhite Minority Ethnic groups ³	15.4%
24% children living in poverty after housing costs ⁴	
Safeguarding	Age 10-17
Number of Children in Need ⁵	450
Male ⁵	56.7%
Female ⁵	42.7%
Indeterminate ⁵	0.7%
Number of Children with a Child Protection Plan ⁷	203
Number of Children in Care ⁶	369
Male ⁶	61.5%
Female ⁶	38.2%
Indeterminate ⁶	0.3%
Number of children and young people at risk of exploitation ⁷	
Suffering	9
Risk of harm	16
Potential concerns	24



1. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole population estimates (published November 2023).
 2. January 2024 School Census (includes all pupils at a BCP School aged 10-17; ages as at 18 January 2024).
 3. January 2022 School Census (all non-white pupils at a BCP School, excluding 'Refused' and 'Information not yet obtained').
 4. Local child poverty indicator 2021/22. From DWP/HMRC 'Children in low income families: local area statistics' (March 2023).
 5. From MOSAIC, as at 29 February 2024. Excluding CP and CIC. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
 6. From MOSAIC, as at 29 February 2024. Gender figures exclude Unknown and Unborn.
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Although the two local authorities differ in geographical size and demography, they have very similar population sizes for 10-17 year-olds. Dorset Council has slightly higher numbers of children eligible for free school meals and slightly higher numbers of children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities. Both local authorities have 1,022 children aged 10-17 who have an allocated social worker.

The proportion of 10-17 year-olds identifying as being from non-white ethnicities is higher in BCP Council (15.4%) than in Dorset Council (5.1%).

3. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The work of the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service 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:

- Dorset Council (chair)
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (vice-chair)
- Dorset Police
- The Probation Service (Dorset)
- NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board
- Public Health Dorset
- Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust
- Dorset Magistrates' Youth Panel
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Partnership Board oversees the development of the Youth Justice Plan, ensuring its links with other local strategic plans. Board members and the DCYJS Head of Service sit on other strategic partnerships, helping to ensure that strategic plans and priorities are integrated and consider the needs of children and victims in the local youth justice system. The links between DCYJS and local strategic groups, and their overlapping strategic priorities, are illustrated below:

**Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service
Strategic Links**



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

The DCYJS participates in local multi-agency agreements for information sharing, for safeguarding and for the escalation of concerns. The DCYJS Partnership Personal Information Sharing Agreement underpins local multi-agency work to prevent offending and to reduce reoffending.

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

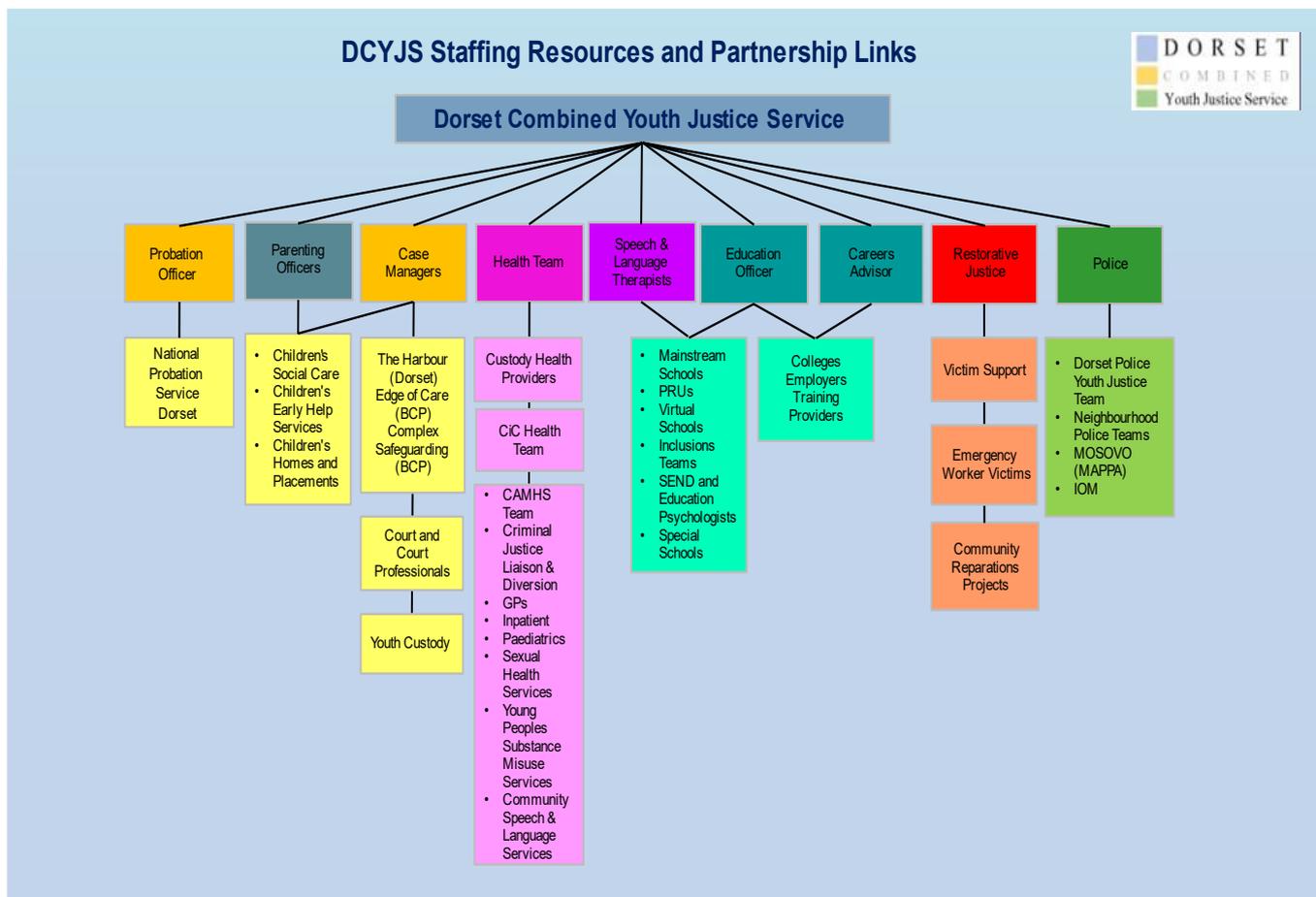
The Partnership Board also provides oversight and governance for local multi-agency protocols in respect of the criminalisation of children in care and the detention of children in police custody. The DCYJS Manager chairs multi-agency operational groups for each protocol and reports on progress to the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

DCYJS is hosted by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Head of Service is a Tier 3 Manager, reporting to the Director for Safeguarding and Early Help in the Children’s Social Care service. The Head of Service also reports to the Corporate Director for Care and Protection in Dorset Council.

Appendix One includes the structure chart for DCYJS and structure charts showing where the YJS sits in each local authority.

DCYJS meets the statutory staffing requirements for youth justice services, set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Specialist staff are seconded into the service by Dorset Police, the Probation Service and Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust. These workers have line managers in both the YJS and their employing organisation. They have direct access to their own organisation’s case management systems, to enable the prompt and proportionate sharing of information. More details about the staffing and financial contributions from YJS partners are provided in Appendix Two.

The YJS multi-disciplinary team also includes education specialists, parenting workers and restorative justice practitioners. The team works closely with other local services, as illustrated below:



4. UPDATE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR

4.1. Progress on priorities in last year's plan

The DCYJS Youth Justice Plan for 2023/24 identified strategic priorities and listed some of the actions that would be taken to support these priorities.

Last year's priorities are listed below with a brief summary of progress made:

Continue to reduce the rate of children entering the justice system:

- There was an 8.5% reduction in the rate of first-time entrants in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, and a 41% reduction compared to 2019/20.
- Recruitment of local authority workers and a Speech and Language Therapist completed for the local implementation of the Ministry of Justice 'Turnaround' programme, to divert children from the justice system.

- Use of the police crime disposal option 'Outcome 22' for children with low level offences who receive assessments and interventions through the Turnaround programme.
- Use of Outcome 22, with YJS support, for children who are ineligible for the Turnaround programme criteria, such as children in care and children on a child protection plan.
- Case decision comparison exercise with another south-west YJS to check consistency and share good practice for Out of Court Disposal.
- Agreement from our YJS Board to fund a two-year scheme from 2024 to complete speech and language assessments for children at risk of school exclusion.

A planned action in last year's Youth Justice Plan, to use data analytics to identify children at risk of future offending, has not progressed. A different approach will now be taken, focusing on the speech, language and communication needs of children at risk of school exclusion (more information about this new approach is included later in this document).

Continue to address over-representation of minority groups in the youth justice system:

- Local children from minority ethnicities are not over-represented in the youth justice system.
- Analysis of police custody solicitor access by ethnicity shows no bias by ethnicity.
- DCYJS Manager represents DCYJS and other local YJS Managers in the Local Criminal Justice Boards' 'Wessex Disproportionality Group' and has agreed a dataset for youth justice ethnicity monitoring (rates of first-time entrants and numbers in custody, by ethnicity).
- YJS performance data reporting is broken down by disadvantaged groups to check for any over-representation.
- Review of the local protocol for reducing the criminalisation of children in care, including continued active multi-agency work to monitor how the protocol is applied in residential settings across Dorset and BCP.
- Use of YJS Speech and Language assessments to help ensure that children's communication needs are understood and responded to in settings like schools and courts.
- Audit of YJS parenting work, focusing on parents of children from ethnic minorities.
- Agreement to focus the 2024 case audits on YJS work with girls and with black and mixed heritage children.

Reduce child exploitation and serious youth violence:

- There was a slight reduction in the number of children receiving justice outcomes for violent offences in 2023/24, compared to 2022/23 (it is recognised though that numerical data does not tell the full story for the harm caused by youth violence).
- DCYJS has contributed to Serious Violence Duty activities in both local authorities, including needs assessment and action planning, to support the multi-agency response to youth violence.
- Case audit of YJS work with children who committed weapon offences, including conversations with children and parents, leading to an action plan for improvements.

- Team workshops to share good practice and agree improvements for assessment and planning for risk of harm to others.
- DCYJS 'Trauma Champion' role extended from service budget after the YJB funding expired.
- Increased number of DCYJS case managers have referred to or observed Enhanced Case Management trauma formulations led by the DCYJS Psychologist.
- DCYJS managers have participated in partnership work in each local authority to develop arrangements for addressing extra-familial harm, including attendance at Dorset Council's new weekly Extra-Familial Harm panels and BCP Council's fortnightly Missing, Exploited and Trafficked panel.

DCYJS partners have not yet resolved the issue of delays to investigations for children suspected of serious violence or sexual offences. DCYJS has offered voluntary interventions to children who are released on bail or under investigation for serious offences. A proposed monthly meeting between DCYJS, Dorset Police and the CPS to track delayed investigations has been delayed and is now due to start in April 2024.

Improve education outcomes for children in the youth justice system:

- Worked with Upton Country Park to jointly develop and run the 'Discover You' project to support young people to become ready for college or employment.
- 17 young people have attended the Discover You project at Upton Country Park, with 10 of them attending more than 5 times. These young people have accessed online learning, gained AQA awards, worked with the Ranger on conservation volunteering activities, engaged in career planning, designed and built animal habitats, bird feeders and play resources for younger children.
- Implemented the use of AQA awards to certificate learning by young people during YJS activities.
- Used the improved DCYJS education data recording to identify children who need support with their education provision and attendance.
- Strengthened links with the local authority Virtual Schools, SEND teams and Inclusion services to resolve child-level issues about suitable education provision and attendance.

Develop the collection and use of performance information:

- Additional work has been undertaken to meet the new YJB Key Performance Indicator reporting requirements.
- Monthly data and performance reports are shared internally among YJS staff to monitor performance and to track relevant changes in the profile and needs of children on the YJS caseload.
- Work has started with the BCP Council Data and Analytics team to enhance the automation and presentation of DCYJS data reports, with promising initial results.
- Joint work with the Dorset Council Business Intelligence team has enabled us to establish a regular method for exchanging caseload information to facilitate services to meet children's needs.

4.2. Performance

DCYJS was inspected in late 2022 under the HMI Probation 'Full Joint Inspection' framework. The inspection report was published in January 2023, rating the service as 'Good'. The inspection report can be found at this link: [A joint inspection of youth offending services in Dorset \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/youth-offending-services-in-dorset/).

In 2023/24 the YJB added a new set of youth justice Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), joining the three existing performance measures for youth justice services. The three previous measures related to:

- The rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system
- The rate and frequency of reoffending by children in the criminal justice system
- The use of custodial sentences.

The YJB publish quarterly performance data for youth justice services, compiled nationally, in relation to these three indicators. The information reported below is drawn from the data published in March 2024 for the period ending December 2023.

Reporting of the new KPIs for youth justice remains a work in progress. Information about the new KPIs is included below.

First Time Entrants

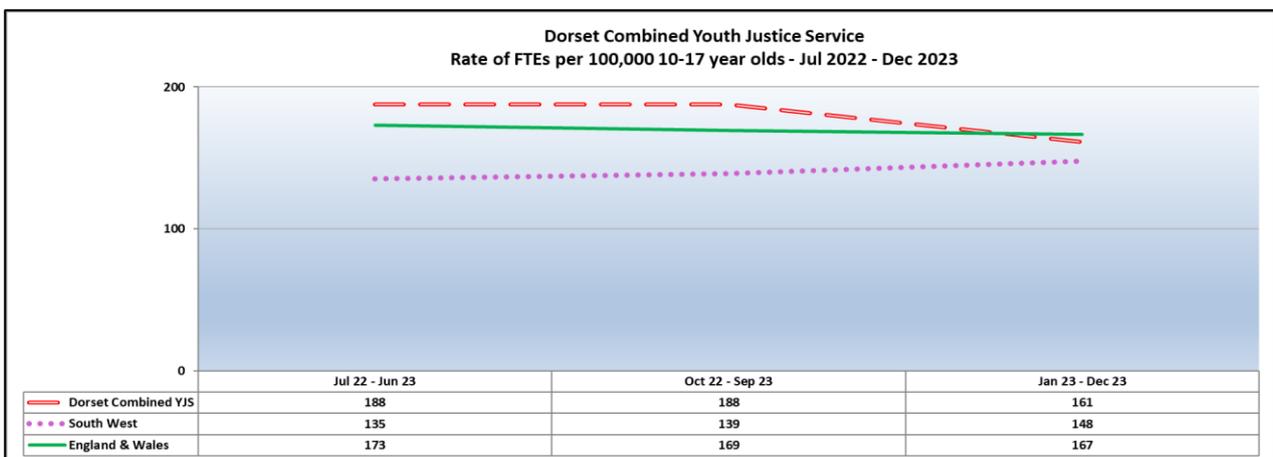
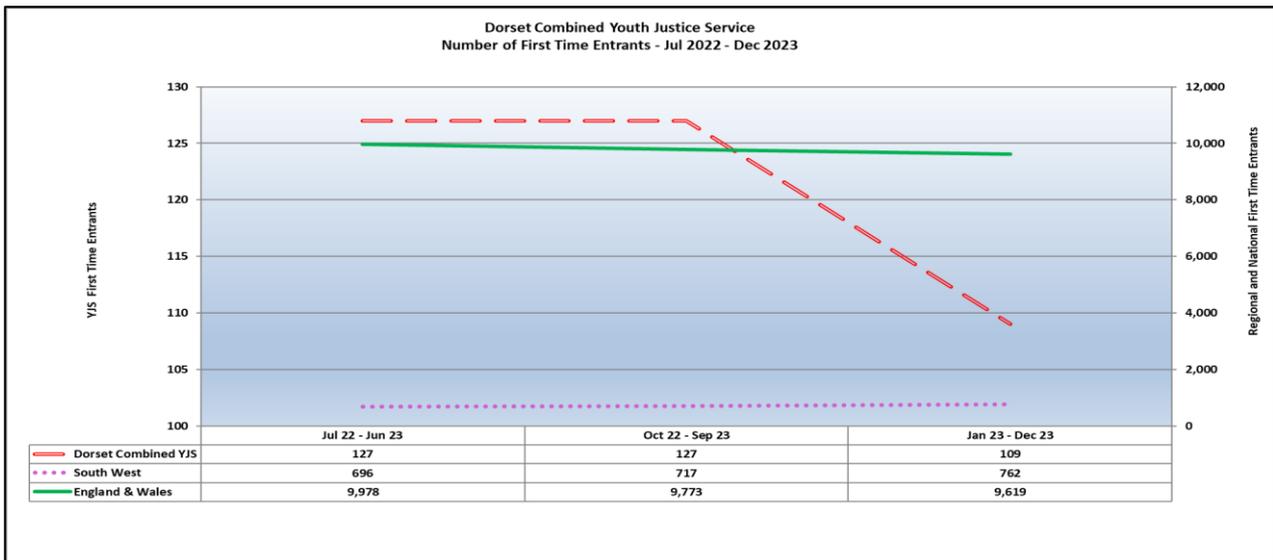
A 'First Time Entrant' is a child receiving a formal criminal justice outcome for the first time. A Youth Caution, a Youth Conditional Caution or a court outcome count as a formal criminal justice outcome. There are also options for diverting children from the justice system, by using informal justice outcomes.

Dorset Police, DCYJS and other children's services work closely together to decide the appropriate outcome for a child who has committed a criminal offence. Whenever possible we seek to use an informal option which does not criminalise the child. It is recognised that receiving a formal justice outcome is in itself detrimental for children.

National performance data for First Time Entrants used to be drawn from the Police National Computer (PNC) but this changed during 2023. The national data is now drawn from the YJB's uploads of information from YJS case management systems.

In recent years DCYJS has consistently had a higher rate of First Time Entrants than the national and regional averages. It is pleasing to note that there has been a consistent reduction in local First Time Entrants, with DCYJS now having a lower rate than the national average.

The following charts show the last three quarters of national First Time Entrants data. The number and rate of local First Time Entrants has reduced in the most recent quarter. For context, the national data for local First Time Entrants in the previous year, to December 2022, showed a total number of 152 (compared to 109 in 2023) and a rate per 100,000 10-17 year-olds of 229 (compared to 161 in 2023).



DCYJS tracks data on its own case management system to monitor the extent and characteristics of children entering the justice system. Local data shows a significant reduction in the number of children entering the justice system compared to the year before the pandemic:

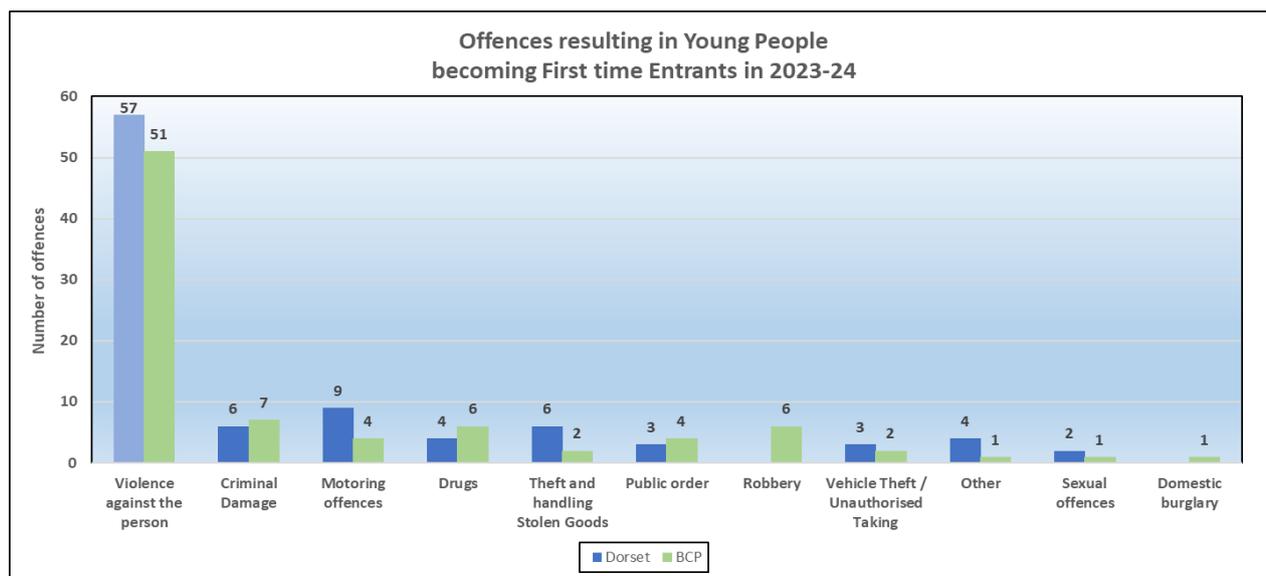
Year	BCP First-Time Entrants	Dorset First-Time Entrants	Total DCYJS First-Time Entrants
2019/20	104	78	182
2020/21	78	48	126
2021/22	77	47	124
2022/23	79	39	118
2023/24	52	56	108

There was a notable reduction in First Time Entrants in BCP this year. Although there was an increase in Dorset, it should be noted that there was a marked increase in April

and May 2023 relating to older offences which could have been dealt with during the previous year.

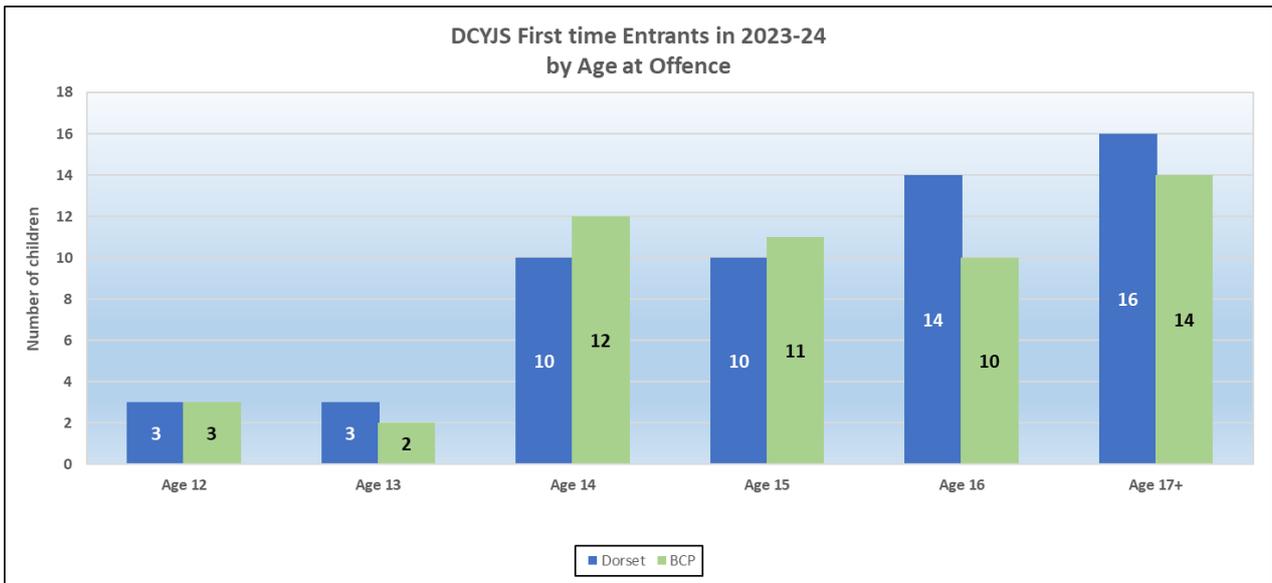
Information about the ethnicity and gender of First Time Entrants is included later in this document, in section 5.1 on 'Over-Representation'.

Decisions about whether to offer a diversion option, instead of a caution or court appearance, depend to some extent on the nature of the offence committed by the child. The following chart shows the offences which led to children becoming First Time Entrants during the past year:



Offences involving possession or use of a weapon, or assaults on emergency workers, are included in the 'Violence against the Person' category and in almost all cases result in a caution or court disposal. Diversion options for these offence types are only considered in exceptional circumstances.

Previous analysis has shown that children who enter the justice system before the age of 14 are likely to have complex needs and may go on to commit further, more serious offences. Only 6 children under the age of 13 entered the justice system in 2023-24, though a further 22 First Time Entrants were aged 13. The age distribution in the following chart shows that First Time Entrants in BCP tend to be slightly younger than those in Dorset. 32.7% of BCP First Time Entrants were aged 14 or younger when they committed their offence, compared to 28.5% of Dorset's First Time Entrants.

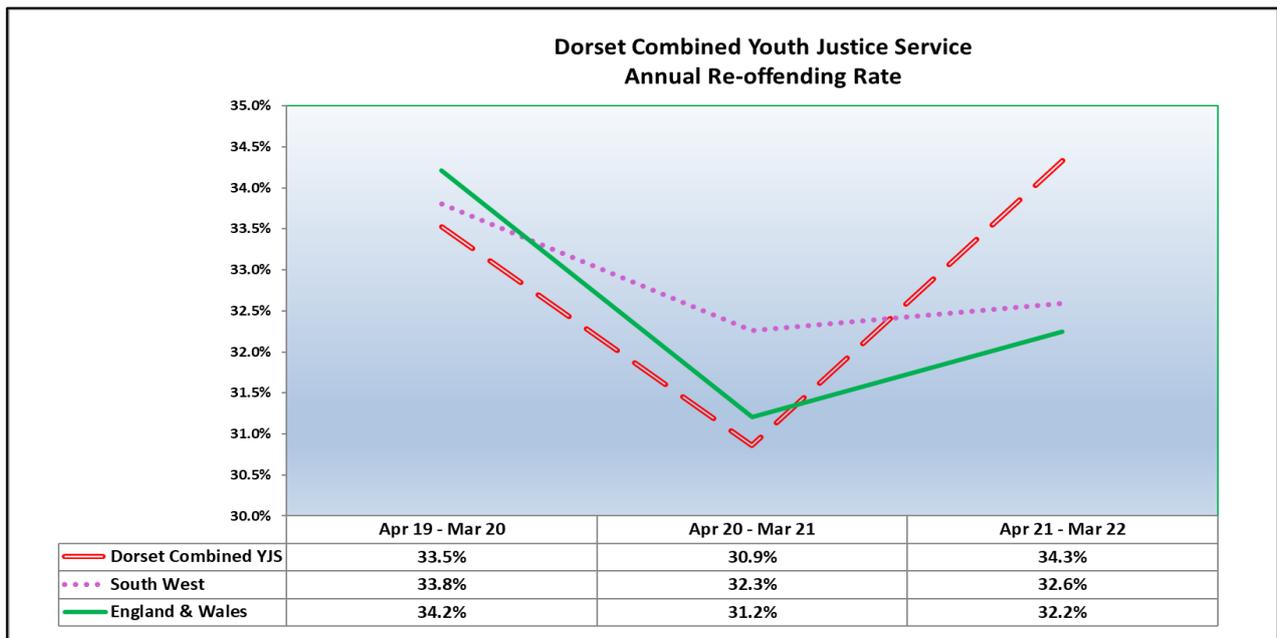


Rate of Proven Reoffending

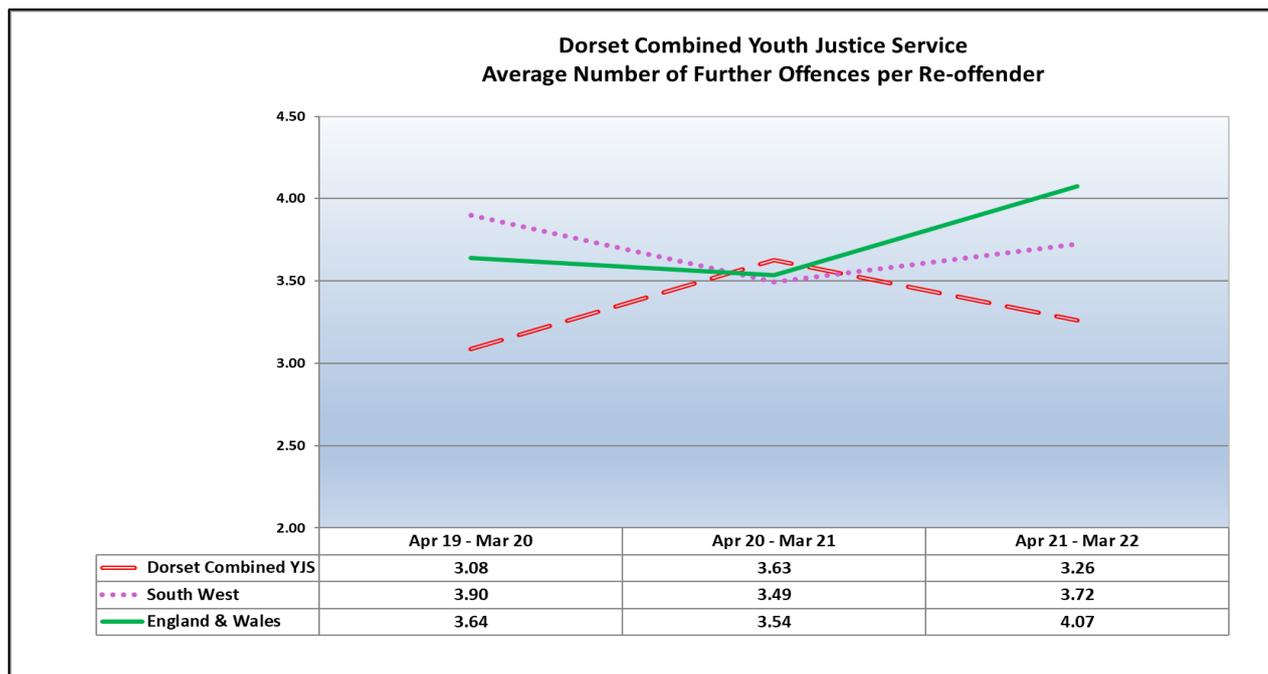
National re-offending data is published in two formats: the 'binary' rate shows the proportion of children in the cohort who go on to be convicted for subsequent offences in the 12 months after their previous justice outcome; the 'frequency' rate shows the average number of offences per reoffender.

Reoffending data is necessarily delayed in order to allow time to see if the child is reconvicted and for that later outcome to be recorded. The following data therefore relates to children with whom the service worked up to March 2022.

Reoffending rate (Reoffenders/Number in cohort)



Reoffences/Reoffenders



DCYJS has remained close to the regional and national averages for both measures. The latest data shows a slightly higher rate of reoffending than the national average but a lower number of offences per reoffender.

Local data, stored on the DCYJS case management system, can also be scrutinised to show information about reoffending. Our most recent analysis looked at children on the DCYJS caseload between January 2022 and December 2022, giving us a more detailed understanding of reoffending by local children:

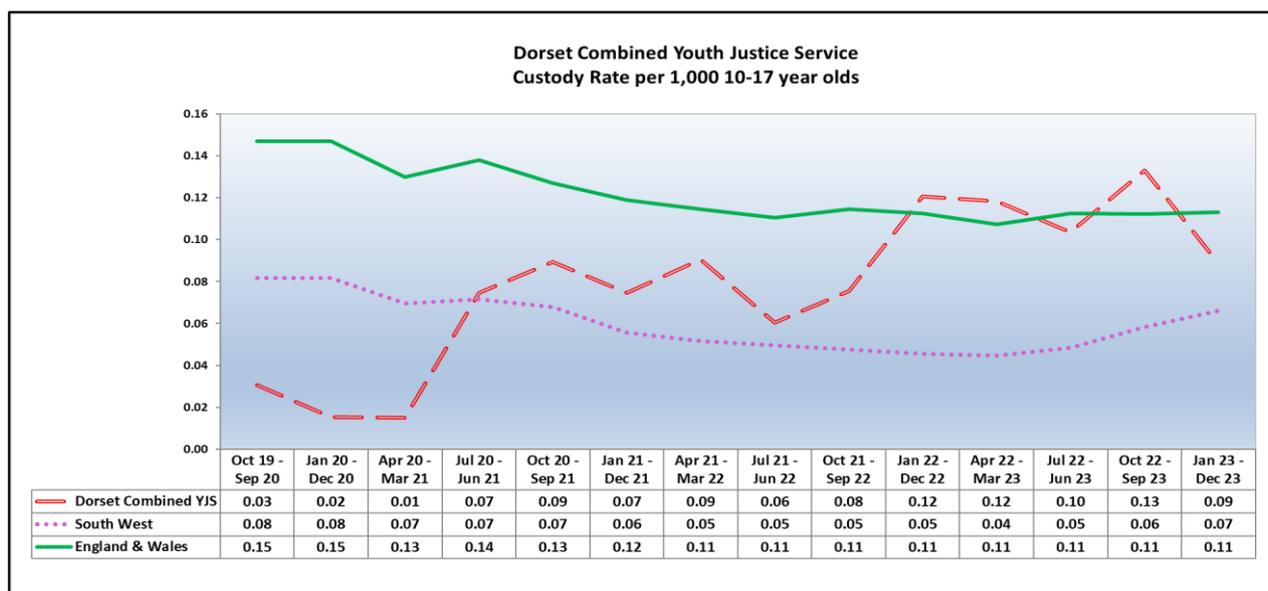
- 14 year-olds are the age group most likely to reoffend.
- Boys are more likely to reoffend than girls but girls who reoffend tend to commit a higher number of offences.
- Black and mixed heritage children show a higher reoffending rate than white children, but the numbers of black and mixed heritage children are low, meaning each child has a greater impact on the percentage rates.
- Children in the BCP Council area had a higher reoffending rate than children in the Dorset Council area.
- Children who were currently or previously in care were more likely to reoffend than children who had not been in care.
- Children on court orders were more likely to reoffend than children on out of court disposals.
- Children who committed arson, criminal damage, robbery, motoring offences or vehicle thefts had higher rates of reoffending than children who committed other types of offence.
- 43% of reoffenders committed less serious further offences, 45% committed offences of the same seriousness and 11% committed more serious offences.

Analysis of local reoffending data helps the YJS to focus its work and to identify groups who may need additional attention.

Use of Custodial Sentences

DCYJS continues to see low numbers of children sentenced to custody.

The latest national data is copied below. The context of this data is a large reduction over recent years in the number of children in custody in England and Wales. This means that small changes in numbers can have a noticeable effect on the local and national rates.



During the most recent period on the above chart, January 2023 – December 2023, a total of 6 children received custodial sentences (3 from each local authority).

The trauma-informed approach to youth justice work encourages us to ask “what happened to you?” rather than “what’s wrong with you?”. In this context, it is interesting to look at some of the common experiences of these 6 young people.

Analysis of the 6 children who received custodial sentences in 2023 shows that:

- All 6 were male.
- 5 of the 6 defined their ethnicity as White British, one identified as Mixed Heritage.
- At the time of sentence, 2 were aged 17, 3 were aged 16 and 1 was aged 15.
- All 6 were previously known to Children’s Social Care (4 had been children in care, 1 had been both Child Protection and Child in Need, the other had been a Child in Need).
- All 6 had been referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), with 3 having been assessed as showing Conclusive Grounds for exploitation and 3 having an initial finding of Reasonable Grounds while the referral is assessed.
- 5 out of 6 were identified as having Speech, Language and Communication Needs, following assessment by the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapist.
- 5 out of 6 had been permanently excluded from school.
- 2 out of 6 had an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The pattern of being known to Children’s Social Care, having experienced child exploitation, having been excluded from school and having speech, language and

communication needs shows the need for effective multi-agency working. DCYJS works closely with other children's services to provide community sentences which have the confidence of our local courts so that custodial sentences are only used as a last resort, for the most serious or persistent offending.

[New Youth Justice Key Performance Indicators](#)

Youth Justice Services were required to report on a new set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from April 2023. The new KPIs record information for children who received diversion outcomes as well as for children on the statutory caseload. The intention is for the new KPIs to show the strength of local partnership working. The following measures are reported:

- Accommodation – the percentage of children in suitable accommodation.
- Education, training and employment (ETE) – the percentage of children attending a suitable ETE arrangement.
- SEND – the percentage of children with SEND who are in suitable ETE with a current, formal learning plan in place.
- Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing – the percentage of children identified as needing an intervention to improve their mental health or emotional wellbeing and the percentage being offered and attending interventions.
- Substance misuse – the percentage of children identified as needing an intervention to address substance misuse and the percentage being offered and attending interventions.
- Out of Court Disposals – the percentage of out of court disposals that are completed or not completed.
- Management Board attendance – the attendance of senior representatives from partner agencies and if partners contribute data from their services to identify ethnic and racial disproportionality.
- Wider services – the percentage of YJS children who are currently on an Early Help plan, on a Child Protection Plan, classified as a Child in Need or a Child in Care.
- Serious Violence – the rates of children convicted for a serious violence offence on the YJS caseload.
- Victims – the percentage of victims who consent to be contacted by the YJS; of those, the percentage who are engaged with about restorative justice opportunities, asked their views prior to out of court disposal decision-making and planning for statutory court orders, provided with information about the progress of the child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate support services (when requested).

The new KPIs have required significant additional work to adapt recording systems and to adjust recording practices. The YJB have started to publish quarterly reports showing the new KPIs for each Youth Justice Service. The consistency, accuracy and usefulness of this data remains a work in progress. The most recent summary KPI tables published by the YJB are copied in Appendix Three, for illustrative purposes.

4.3. Risks and issues

Like other youth justice services, DCYJS operates in a context of system challenges and resource pressures.

Current issues and future risks being faced by DCYJS include the following:

Issue/risk facing DCYJS	Actions being taken in response
Delays in the youth justice system, linked to pressures in the wider criminal justice system, make it harder to work effectively with young people to prevent future offending and harder to provide timely support to victims and to engage them in Restorative Justice.	Proactive review of children released under investigation or on bail, to offer voluntary interventions by DCYJS. Work with Dorset Police, as part of their Child Centred Policing Strategy, to reduce investigation delays and to coordinate investigations for children with multiple outstanding offences.
The shortage of suitable placements for children in care, and placement moves, can disrupt key factors such as education, health care and positive peer networks, and can make it harder to propose credible bail packages and community sentences for children at risk of custody.	Work with colleagues in Children’s Services to assist in providing information for placement searches. Allocated DCYJS case managers are active in visiting children in care who are placed out of area and in maintaining positive relationships with those children.
Permanent exclusions from school, and difficulties finding suitable alternative provision.	New project to provide Speech and Language assessments and support to schools for children at risk of school exclusion.
Funding and resources – real terms reductions since DCYJS was formed in 2015, uncertainty about future funding and delays each year to the announcement of the YJ Grant (the 2023/24 grant allocations were not announced until July 2023).	The combined service, working across two local authorities, provides resilience and savings of scale which has enabled the service to maintain high practice standards in the context of reducing resources.
YJB directive to replace the local assessment tool used for Out of Court Disposals with a national tool – concerns over quality of the new tool and loss of ability to innovate and adapt to local learning.	Implementation plan for the new assessment tool to include opportunities for sharing good practice within the team and from other services. Additional work to ensure the quality of risk of harm assessments is maintained, building on the work we have done to meet the inspection recommendations for this area of our work.

5. PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

5.1. ‘Child First’ practice

Under the leadership of the Youth Justice Board, ‘Child First’ is the guiding principle for the youth justice sector, underpinning the national guidance documents ‘Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System’ and ‘Case Management Guidance’. These documents direct the work of youth justice services.

The Child First approach is built on evidence demonstrating its effectiveness to prevent offending by children who are at risk of entering the justice system and to reduce offending by the small number of children who do enter the youth justice system. The research evidence is summarised in this document: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/social-policy-studies/research/child-first-justice/>.

DCYJS supports these principles and promotes them in its own work and in its interactions with local partners in children’s services and the youth justice system.

The Child First approach has four tenets, listed below.

The ABCD of Child First practice	Examples of how DCYJS implements this in our work
As children: recognise how children are developmentally different from adults and require different support.	DCYJS uses Speech and Language assessments and trauma formulations to help identify each child’s communication needs and developmental stage and the appropriate support for the child.
Building pro-social identity: promote children’s individual strengths and capacities to develop a pro-social identity, focusing on positive child outcomes rather than just trying to manage offending.	DCYJS have worked with Upton Country Park to provide the ‘Discover You’ project, aimed at building children’s skills, confidence and employability.
Collaborating with children: involve children meaningfully to encourage their investment, engagement and social inclusion.	Children are actively involved in developing the plans for our work with them, as part of the DCYJS commitment to working restoratively. Case records are now written ‘to the child’ to be more inclusive and to help shift the worker’s perspective.
Diverting from stigma: promote supportive diversion from the criminal justice system where possible, or minimising stigma within it, as we know that stigma causes further offending	The ‘Turnaround’ programme has been used to divert children from formal justice outcomes. YJS Speech and Language assessments are written on Dorset HealthCare documentation, without reference to the YJS, to avoid stigmatising the child.

The strategic priorities in the DCYJS Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25 are aligned with the YJB’s Child First principles, reflecting work to strengthen the local implementation of the four tenets of Child First practice.

Voice of the child

DCYJS works collaboratively with children to hear their voice during their contact with our service. The team’s Speech and Language Therapists complete assessments so that each child’s communication needs can be understood and responded to, not just by other workers in the team but also by the child, their carers and other professionals working with the child. Case records are addressed to the child and quote their words, to ensure the child’s voice is prominent.

As well as hearing the child's voice in the team's day to day practice, there are also processes in place to gather the views of children and other service users about their experience of the service's work.

Spontaneous comments from service users about their experience of our service are recorded and analysed, using a data report from our case management system.

The following advice from a young person about how we should respond to weapon offences is a helpful guide for all our work and for other professionals:

- Don't tell us how dangerous knives are. We already know that.
- Pick up on all the good things kids do, there will be things if you look for them.
- Worksheets are a waste of time.
- Listen, including to what's not being said.
- Don't keep asking the same thing if you've already been given the answer.
- Young people need to find a replacement for the activity they are stopping.

Other examples of recent comments from service users include:

The YJS Case Manager "is that all too rare combination of someone who presents as professional, knowledgeable, non-judgemental, warm and helpful yet still able to have those tough conversations, put in the boundaries and maintain them".

The child's Mum was "very happy with the intervention, explained that her son can sometimes be difficult to engage, but he got on well with his YJS worker, described her as friendly and easy to talk to. Mum felt she was kept informed of progress with the intervention and didn't have any concerns. She feels her son is now in a good place - working and got an apprenticeship - is on the right track and both he and his mum think he will maintain this."

The child's parent said that "it worked for us. The YJS worker was really empathic. My son felt heard and listened to. It was scary at the start coming in as we had had no previous contact with services. Will he be judged? But it was not like that at all, would it be harsh? It was not like that. It was sad when it came to an end." I asked what her son was up to now "He's just got an apprenticeship, we are really pleased, he's done so well, he starts in 10 days. The YJS worker backed up the messages that we have tried to give him about using what has happened in a good way....We wouldn't change anything about the service we received".

Each year the YJS undertakes a case audit on a priority area of YJS work. In 2023 the audit focused on our work with children who had committed weapon offences. As part of the audit, we contacted the children and parents in the audit sample. 6 children and 4 parents responded to our request for their views.

All 6 children said they felt safer – not all gave reasons for this – one child said they no longer carry a blade, one said they are no longer offending, one felt it had given them a chance to change.

The 6 children were asked what had gone well:

Working with me looking at my anger. I feel my anger has got better.

Helped me out a lot, not got into trouble for a year – always ask for X as worker as she understands me.

Child feels that worker was really good, that he felt involved, that his views were gained.

I like the meetings I think they are sound.

All 4 parents/ carers said they knew what YJS were suggesting they did to support their child following the offence.

The YJS also seeks the views of victims about their contact with our service. Sometimes victims also offer views about their experience of the justice system prior to the YJS involvement.

As a result of victim feedback about the Out of Court Disposal decision-making process, managers in the YJS and Dorset Police reviewed and amended the process for incorporating victim views into the decision-making arrangements.

5.2. Resources and Services

The funding contributions to the DCYJS partnership budget are listed in Appendix Two, showing the figures for 2023/24. Indicative budget contributions for 2024/25 from local partners have been agreed, with no increase on the 2023/24 contributions, but the Youth Justice Grant allocation has not yet been announced.

All local authority staff in DCYJS are employed by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. Other DCYJS staff are employed by Dorset Police, the Probation Service (Dorset) and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. A DCYJS Structure Chart is included in Appendix One, showing the posts provided through our partnership resources. DCYJS has a strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary identity, meeting the staffing requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

Like all public services, DCYJS operates in a context of reducing resources. Ensuring value for money and making best use of resources is a high priority for the service. The combined partnership, working across Dorset's local authorities since 2015, has enabled the service to maintain high practice standards while managing real terms budget reductions over that period.

The Youth Justice Board Grant is paid subject to terms and conditions relating to its use. The Grant supports the front-line delivery of essential youth justice services for children. The Grant may only be used towards the achievement of the following outcomes:

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

The conditions of the Grant also refer to the services that must be provided and the duty to comply with data reporting requirements.

The Youth Justice Grant contributes to the Partnership's resources for employing practitioners who work with children to prevent and reduce offending and to keep children and other members of the community safe from harm. Resources from the Youth Justice Grant are also used to provide restorative justice and reparative activities, to promote pro-social activities for children building on their strengths and to improve the education, training and employment opportunities of young people in the local youth justice system.

In addition to the service outcomes listed above, the Youth Justice Grant and other Partnership resources are used to achieve the strategic priorities set out later in this Plan. Progress against those priorities is reported to the DCYJS Partnership Board, with oversight also provided by the respective children's services scrutiny committees of the two local authorities.

5.3. YJS Partnership Board Development

HMI Probation's Joint Inspection of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service was published in January 2023. The inspection included scrutiny of the Board's work. The inspection report rated the service's Governance and Leadership as 'Good'.

As well as identifying many strengths, the inspectors suggested possible 'Areas for improvement':

- *The board chairing arrangements are not rotated. For the partnership board to be challenged in its ambition to drive the performance of the service forward, a level of independence is required that holds all partnership agencies to account.*
- *While the seniority of the board membership is appropriate, attendance is not consistent.*
- *Although new board members meet with the YJS service manager and chair of the board as part of their induction, there is no formal induction pack which ensure consistency.*

The Board included all these points in its work in 2023/24:

- The Board reviewed and confirmed its chairing arrangements.
- The attendance of Board members is monitored at each meeting and has improved since the inspection.
- An updated induction process for new Board members has been agreed and has been used with new Board members.

The Board has also allocated extra meeting time each year to review its effectiveness and to agree areas for development. At its meeting in January 2024, the Board agreed to use its meetings in the coming year for thematic discussions, focused on the Partnership's strategic priorities. The Board is also looking to widen its membership to include the voluntary sector and the business community.

5.4. Workforce Development

The DCYJS Workforce Development Policy identifies core training for different roles in the team. As well as refresher training in child safeguarding, extra-familial harm and information governance, team members are also trained in Motivational Interviewing, AIM3 Harmful Sexual Behaviour assessments and Restorative Justice with complex and sensitive cases. Team members will continue to attend training and development activities in these approaches in 2024/25.

In January 2024 the whole service participated in training for 'Working Restoratively'. The aim of this training was to refresh the team's knowledge, skills and commitment in restorative practice, both for working with our service users and as a way of being with each other. This reflects our commitment to being a restorative organisation and will be a priority for us in 2024/25.

As well as attending external training courses, DCYJS runs internal workshops on relevant practice topics, building on issues identified in quality assurance and learning exercises. The main focus for good practice workshops in 2023/24 was on improving our work in assessing and responding to the risk of harm posed by some young people. This followed our inspection recommendation about risk of harm assessments and our case audit of our work with children who had committed weapon offences.

In addition to the core training courses, which will continue to be attended and updated in 2024/25, the service's development plans require staff training in the following areas:

- Prevention and Diversion Assessment tool – to support the YJB's directive for all Youth Justice Services to use this tool from April 2024.
- Extra-Familial Harm – train with colleagues from other local services to embed the use of new multi-agency assessment and planning processes.
- AQA awards – train additional team members in the provision and certification of activities with children for AQA awards.

DCYJS also supports individual career progression plans for team members. Plans for 2024/25 include:

- a Youth Justice Worker continuing with his social work qualification through the Social Work Apprenticeship with BCP Council and Solent University.
- a Youth Justice Worker studying for the Level 5 Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship.
- a performance analyst studying for the Advanced Data Fellowship.
- a Youth Justice Officer working towards her Practice Educator qualification.

DCYJS hosts student placements for students studying for social work qualifications and for trainee Speech and Language Therapists.

5.5. Evidence-based practice, innovation and evaluation

Evidence shows that the key determinant for positive change is a pro-social relationship with a trusted adult. The primary focus for effective practice in DCYJS is therefore the quality of workers' relationships with children on the caseload, alongside positive relationships within the team and with other professionals. The approach also builds on previous feedback from young people on the DCYJS caseload about what was most

important to them in their experience of the service. The whole service training in 'Working Restoratively' in January 2024 was aimed at supporting this key aspect of our evidence-based work.

Employment and training support for 16-17 year-olds

The service has continued to focus on improving young people's employment and training prospects.

DCYJS has partnered with Upton Country Park to provide the 'Discover You' project. Using Lottery Heritage funding, the project aims to improve young people's self-esteem, practical skills and employability, to increase their chances of accessing employment and training.

17 young people attended the project during 2023/24. Some of the positive outcomes for these young people included:

- Access to online learning within different subject areas e.g. Food Hygiene, First Aid, Health & Safety in the workplace, Manual Handling, Customer Service, Fire Safety and Barista Training.
- AQA Certificated Learning –most young people complete around 5-10 awards, depending on how long they attend and what they engage in.
- Work Experience options around Upton Country Park within the Welcome Centre and Café.
- Conservation Volunteering Activities – Working with the Ranger onsite to complete practical activities around the site like planting trees, taking out hedgerows, coppicing, painting, creating woodwork items (different things available at different times of the year).
- Team Building – different opportunities like den building and orienteering.
- Life skills – budgeting/managing money, dealing with bills, communication skills.
- ETE and Careers – Careers Information Advice and Guidance – Career Action Planning, CV work, Applications for College and Jobs, Interview Skills.
- Other Support towards qualifications - CSCS Practice, Maths and English Assessments.
- Completing practical tasks for Upton Country Park, e.g. animal habitat, bird feeders, designing and building play resources for school/nursery groups.

The Lottery Heritage funding for the Discover You project expires at the end of March 2024. We are seeking funding to continue and develop the project in 2024/25.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner also continued to provide funding for young people to work with training providers to gain their 'CSCS' card to increase their chances of work in the construction sector.

Early identification of speech and language needs for children at risk of school exclusion

Our local Youth Justice Partnership has strategic priorities to reduce school exclusions, to prevent offending and to meet the speech, language and communication needs of children who may otherwise enter the youth justice system. The DCYJS Partnership Board has allocated funding for a two-year project to identify and support the speech, language and communication needs of children at risk of school exclusion. The project is

modelled on a successful scheme run by Milton Keynes Youth Justice and Support Service.

Recruitment for an additional Speech and Language Therapist and a Speech and Language Assistant has been successfully completed in March 2024. Their roles will be to assess the communication needs of children who are at risk of school exclusion and to support schools to respond to the child's specific needs.

The project is expected to commence in June 2024. The project design will include collaboration with schools, local authorities, children and families. Evaluation will be an important part of the project.

5.6. Standards for work with children in the youth justice system

All Youth Justice Services are required to comply with the Youth Justice Board's 'Standards for work with children in the youth justice system' (2019). The Youth Justice Board oversees a programme of self-assessments to monitor compliance.

In 2023, all services were directed to audit their work under 'Standard 2: Work in Court'. The YJB provided an audit tool, comprising 22 questions. The DCYJS self-assessment rated our work in court as Good, with most of the audit questions being rated Good or Outstanding.

Two questions were rated as 'Requires Improvement'. One of these questions related to the need to produce a policy document for our work to minimise the use of custodial remand for children. This action is underway, and also links to the recent thematic inspection by HMI Probation on 'work with children subject to remand in youth detention'.

The other question rated as Requires Improvement related to whether our court processes take all possible steps to promote fair treatment of particular groups of children. Our auditors noted that "the analysis of care status and neurodiversity needs is stronger than the analysis and narrative about ethnicity and gender or other protected characteristics". Team members have worked on this aspect of our practice, adjusting the format of Pre-Sentence Reports to strengthen the analysis of diversity issues and their impact on the young person.

The positive outcome from our audit of court work reflects the strong partnership between DCYJS and our local youth courts. The chair of the Dorset Magistrates Youth Panel sits on the DCYJS Partnership Board. This has enabled other partners to hear the views of magistrates, with concerns being raised during 2023/24 about the length of time between offences being committed and the child appearing in court, and about the adequacy of education provision for some children who appear in court.

Youth magistrates worked together with the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapist and a DCYJS court officer to produce a booklet to help prepare young people for attending court. This booklet, 'You are going to Youth Court in Dorset', was featured as an example of good practice in the Magistrates Association magazine in June 2023.

The YJB is yet to decide on National Standards audit requirements for 2024/25.

5.7. Response to inspections, reviews and audits.

Inspection reports, learning reviews and case audits all contribute to our service planning.

The most recent inspection of our service was published in January 2023, rating the service as 'Good'. The inspectors made 6 recommendations, which we followed up through an action plan, overseen by the YJS Partnership Board. Actions have been completed for all but one of the recommendations. The remaining recommendation relates to strengthening the local partnership work in respect of child exploitation. Both local authorities have been working with their partners to refresh their working arrangements in this area, under the broader heading of 'extra-familial harm'. Implementation of the revised arrangements will include dissemination and training for staff in all relevant agencies, including DCYJS, during 2024/25.

In November 2023, HMI Probation published 'A joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention'. The DCYJS Partnership Board reviewed this report, and its recommendations, in January 2024. Actions to support these inspection recommendations are included in our plans for 2024/25. More information about the use of secure remand for local children can be found in section 6.11X.

DCYJS has contributed to a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in Dorset, due for publication in May 2024, and to local learning reviews in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. These reviews relate to incidents of significant harm being experienced by, or caused by, young people who are known to the YJS. Learning from these reviews is included in the team's development plans, and is reported to the YJS Partnership Board.

DCYJS undertakes thematic case audits, linked to the service's priorities. The focus in 2023 was on work with children who have committed weapon offences. Areas for improvement in our practice were addressed in workshops with the team and in adjustments to our working practices. The themes for our case audits in 2024/25 are on DCYJS work with girls and with black or mixed-heritage children.

6. Local and National Priorities for 2024/25

This section of the Plan reviews issues of local and national priority for youth justice which contribute to our service priorities for 2024/25.

6.1. Over-representation

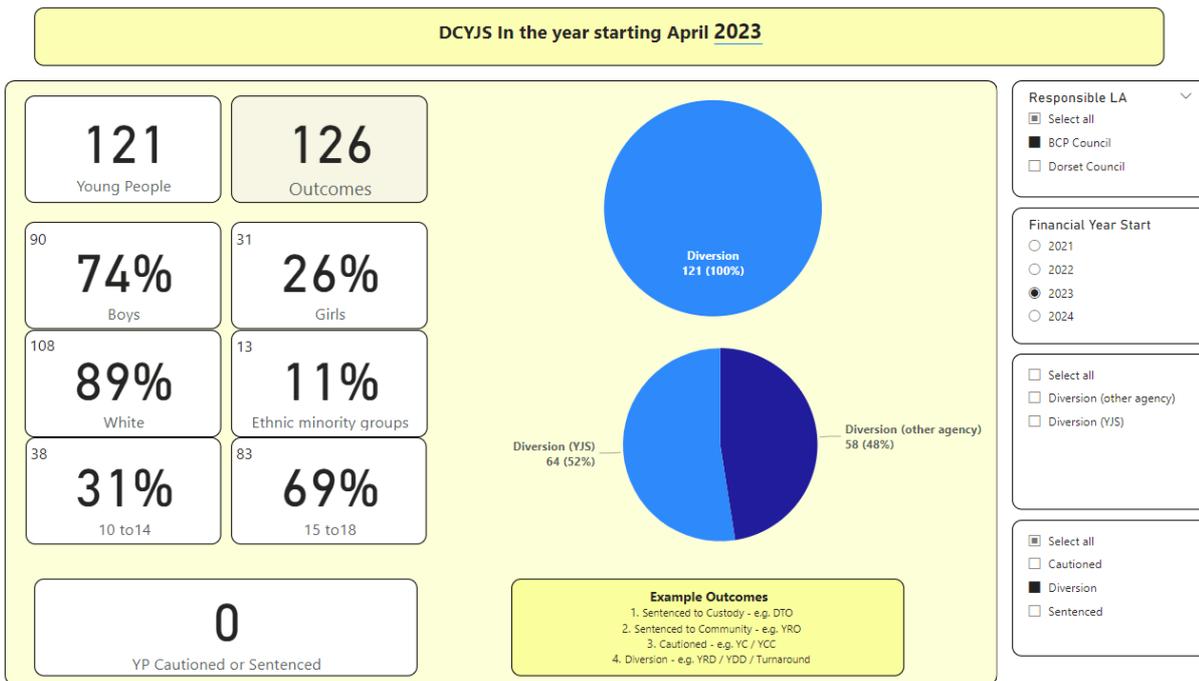
National data shows that some groups of children, such as those with diverse ethnic heritage, children in care and children with Special Educational Needs are over-represented in the youth justice system. DCYJS monitors caseload information for children from minority and disadvantaged groups.

Data from the 2021 census shows ethnicity information for 10-17 year-olds in our two local authorities. 12.9% of 10-17 year-olds in the BCP Council area identify as not having a white ethnicity. The equivalent figure for the Dorset Council area is 5.4%. This data

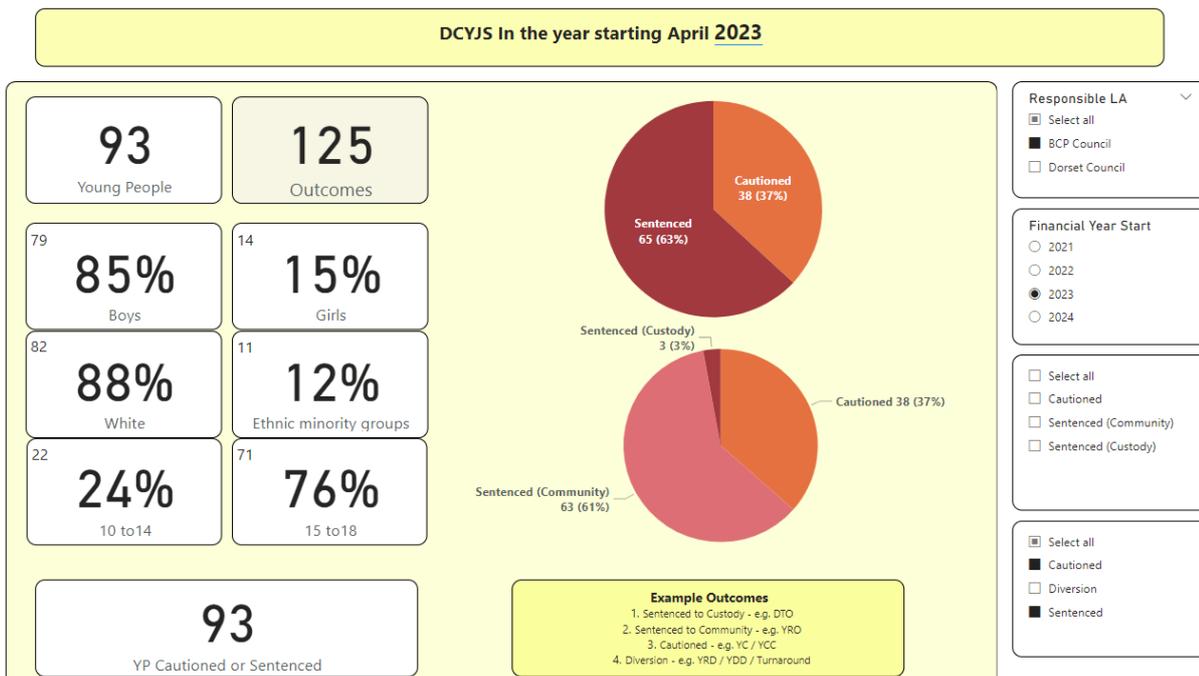
helps us compare the rate of children on our caseload from different ethnicities with proportions in the local population.

One of our development activities in 2023/24, which will continue in the coming year, is to improve our presentation and use of caseload information. The following charts provide information about the children in the youth justice system in each local authority, separating them by children who were diverted and children who were cautioned or sentenced.

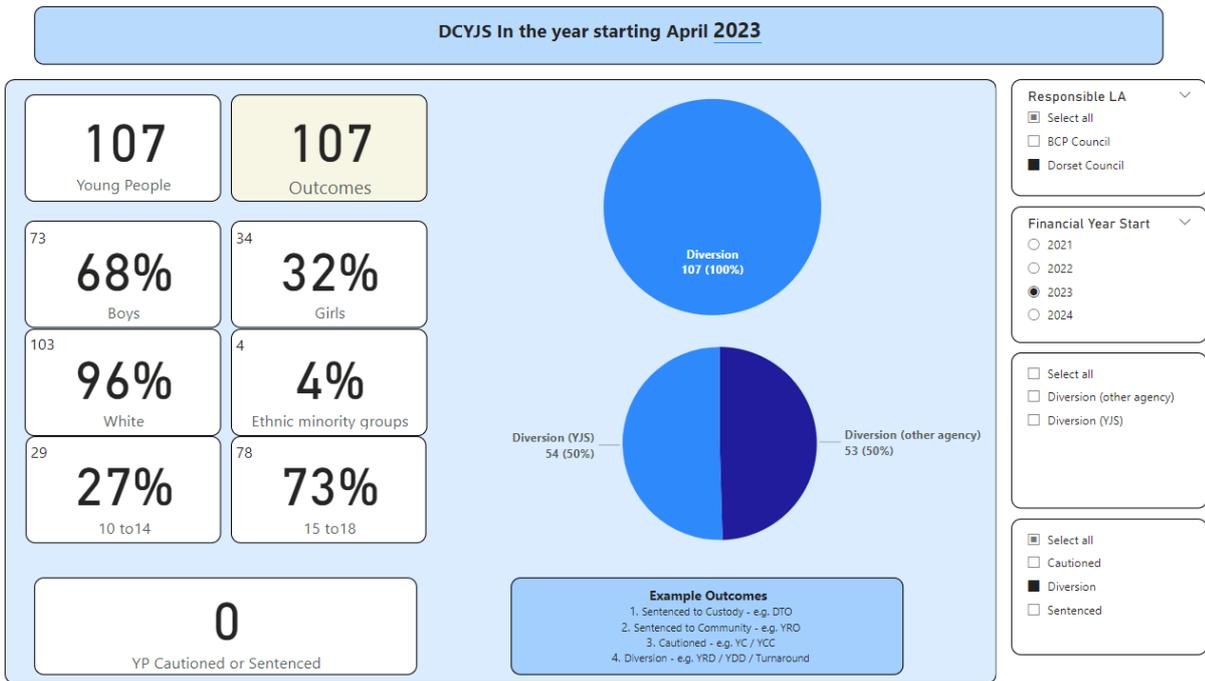
BCP Council children who were diverted from the justice system in 2023/24



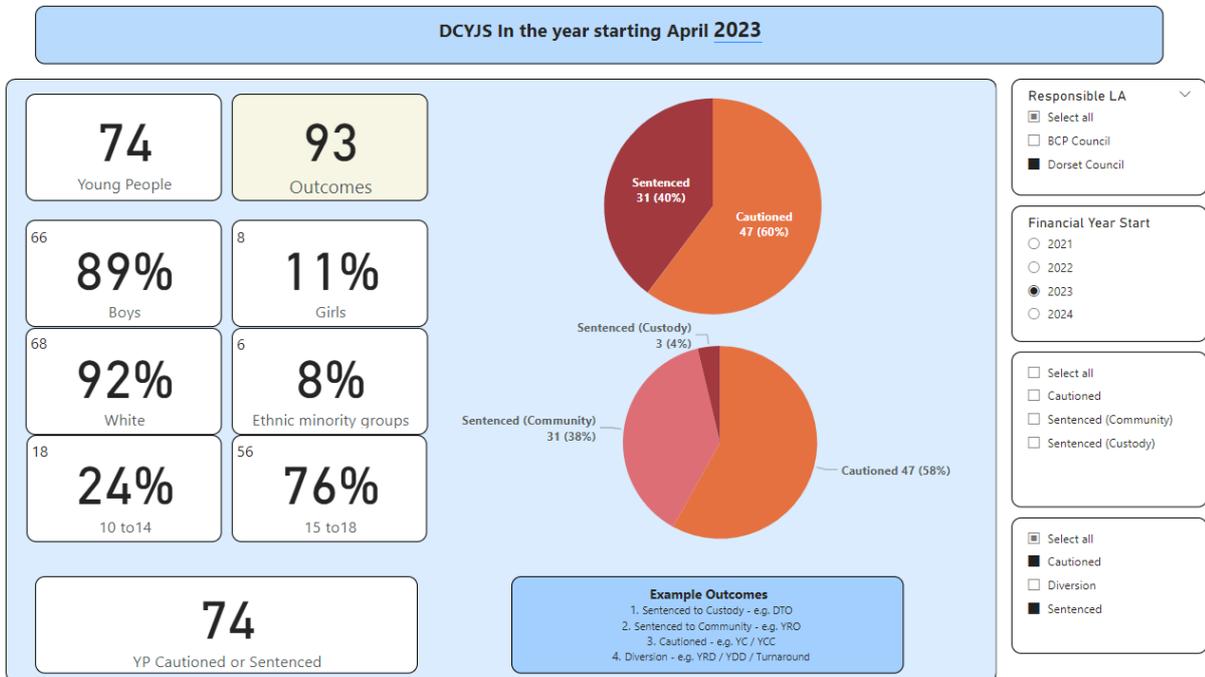
BCP Council children who were cautioned or sentenced in 2023/24



Dorset Council children who were diverted from the justice system in 2023/24



Dorset Council children who were cautioned or sentenced in 2023/24

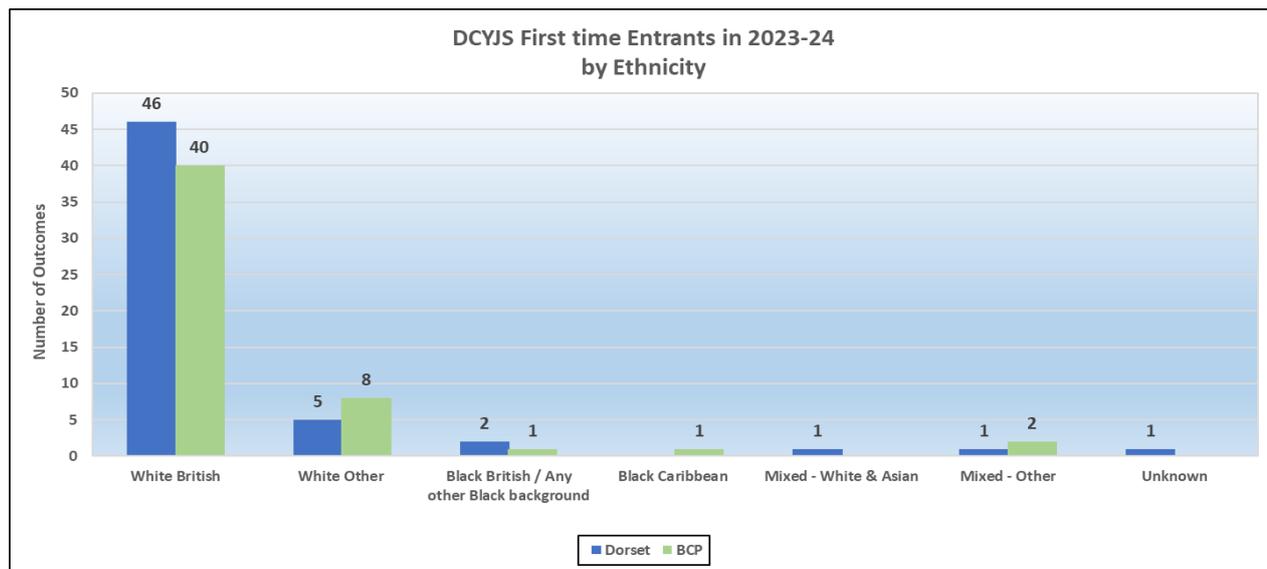


Comparison of these charts shows that:

- There is a notably higher proportion of girls among the children diverted from the justice system compared to the proportion of girls in the groups who were cautioned or sentenced.

- The proportion of children with non-white ethnicity is lower among the children who were diverted than among the children who were cautioned or sentenced.
- Children who do not identify as white are not over-represented in BCP, or among children in Dorset who are diverted, but they are over-represented among children sentenced or cautioned in Dorset.
- In both local authorities, there is a higher proportion of younger children among those who were diverted.

Last year's Youth Justice Plan noted that we had not seen over-representation of minority ethnicities among children entering the justice system. This has remained the case in 2023-24 for the overall area, as shown in the following chart:

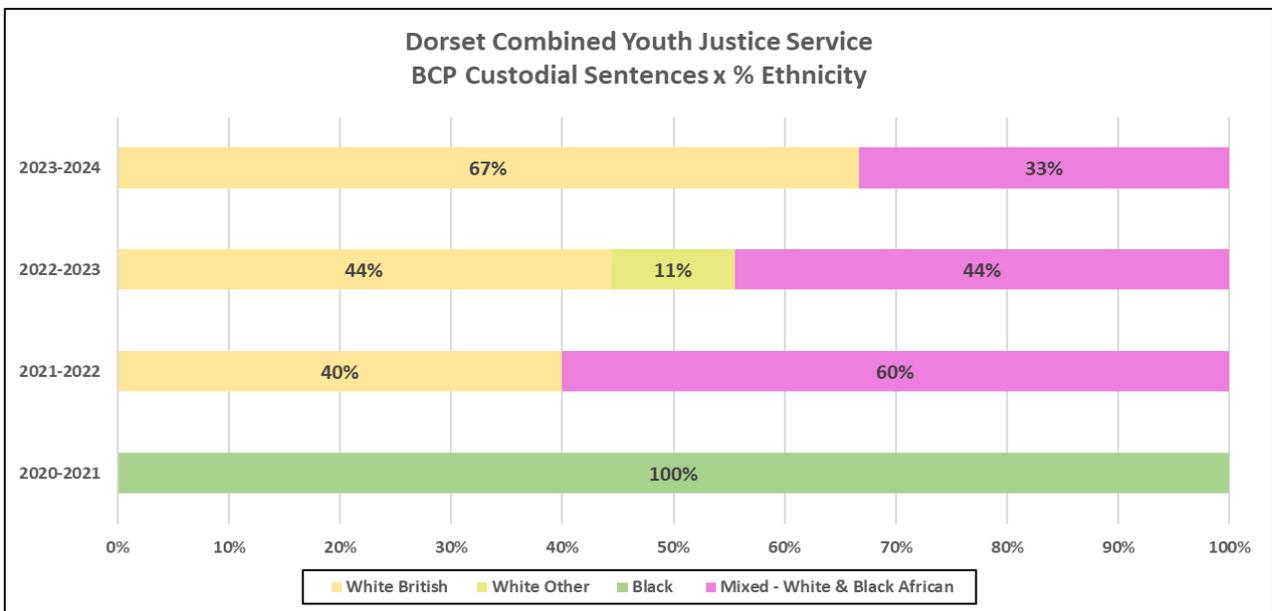
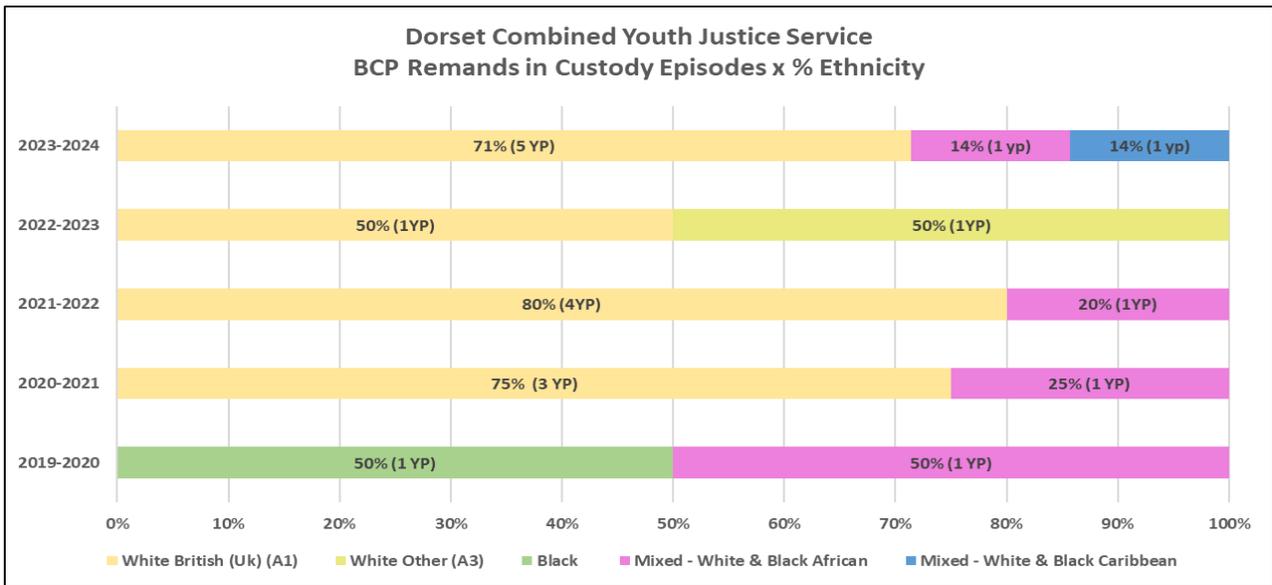


4 out of 56 first-time entrants in Dorset did not define themselves as having white ethnicity. At 7.1% this is slightly above the rate in the overall population, but a decrease of 1 child would have brought the percentage into line with the population rate.

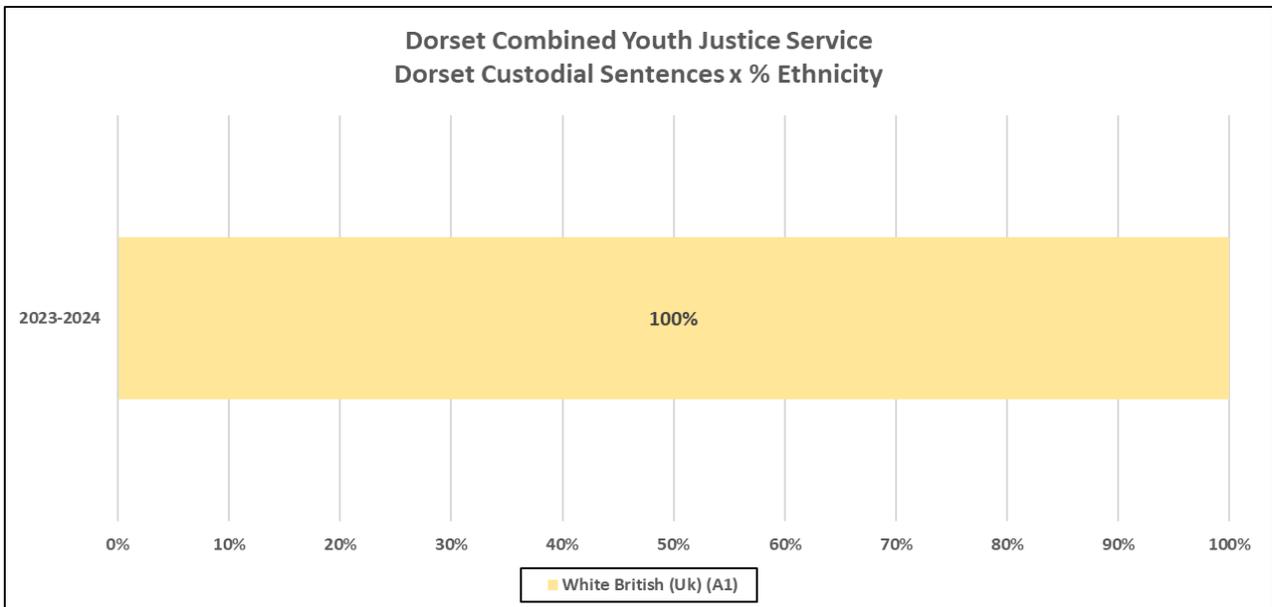
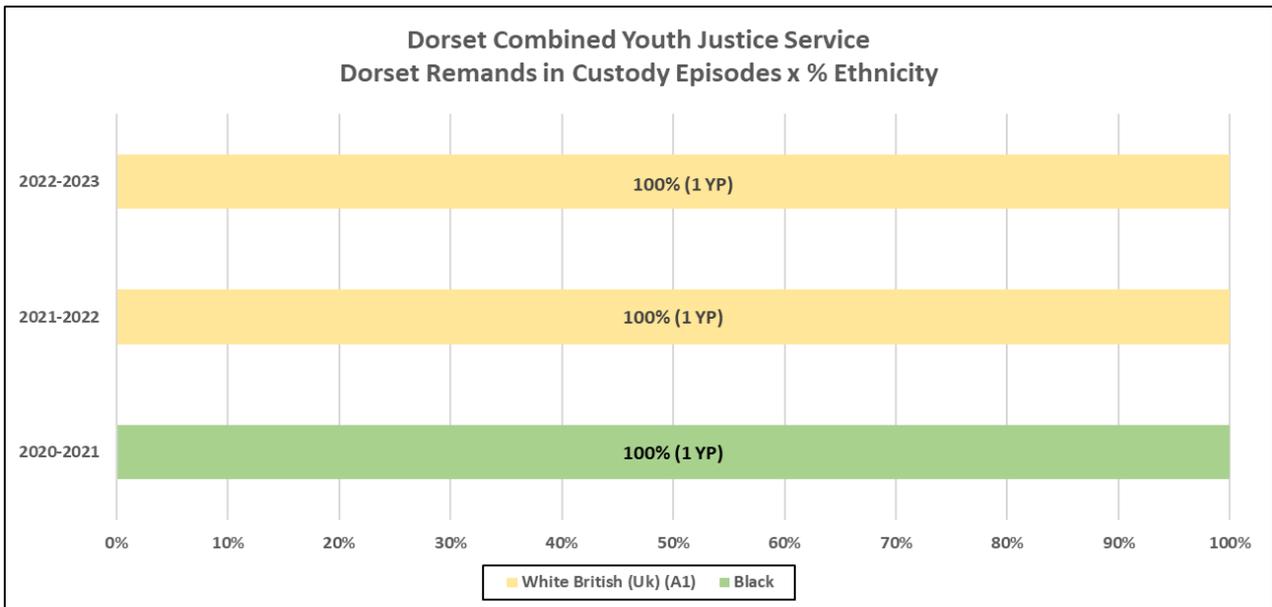
4 out of 52 first-time entrants in BCP did not define themselves as having white ethnicity. At 7.7%, this is below the population rate of 12.9%.

Although we do not see over-representation among first-time entrants, we also track how far children 'progress' into the youth justice system.

The following charts show ethnicity for children remanded or sentenced to custody in each local authority in recent years.



The low numbers of local children being remanded or sentenced to custody makes it difficult to provide sound statistical analysis of possible over-representation of young people with diverse ethnic heritage. Amongst the BCP Council children who have been remanded or sentenced to custody, there is evidence of over-representation of children who do not identify as white, although this appears to be reducing in recent years.



For Dorset Council, there is no evidence of over-representation of children from minority ethnicities among those who were remanded or sentenced to custody in recent years.

In summary, there is a nuanced and varied picture locally for over-representation by ethnicity. Overall, local children from global majority ethnicities are not more likely to be criminalised and are not over-represented. There are some subtleties to the data though, such as how children from different groups progress through the justice system, which require further attention. During 2024/25 we will review our work with black and mixed heritage children and we will explore examples of anti-racist youth justice practice.

Access to Out of Court Disposals, including diversion options, requires the child to admit the offence. One hypothesis for black and mixed heritage children progressing further into the justice system is that they may miss out on Out of Court Disposals due to not being willing to admit the offence in police interviews. In 2022 Dorset Police changed its approach to the provision of solicitors for children in police custody, to an 'opt out' approach. Analysis by Dorset Police of legal advice to children in custody in 2023 shows that ethnicity does not affect the likelihood of the child receiving legal advice:

01/01/2023 - 31/12/2023	Solicitor Required?		Total
	No	Yes	
Under 18's			
A2. Asian - Pakistani	-	1	1
A9. Any other Asian background	-	1	1
B1. Black Caribbean	-	5	5
B2. Black African	-	2	2
I1. Gypsy or Irish Traveller	-	2	2
M1. White & Black Caribbean	-	9	9
M2. White & Black African	-	8	8
M3. White & Asian	-	1	1
M9. Any other mixed background	1	4	5
O1. Chinese	-	2	2
O9. Any other ethnic group	1	1	2
W1. White British	22	302	324
W2. White Irish	-	3	3
W9. Any other white background	1	7	8
NS. Not Stated	2	30	32
Total	27	387	414

We also monitor the gender breakdown of our caseload and the distribution by gender at different stages of the youth justice system. There tends to be a higher proportion of girls among children who are diverted from a formal outcome, with lower proportions of girls amongst those who receive a community or custodial sentence.

At a national and local level there is evidence that boys are over-represented among children in custody. There are around 400 children in custody in England and Wales but the number of girls is less than 10. Locally, no girls have been remanded or sentenced to custody in recent years.

The proportion of girls on the DCYJS caseload fluctuates but usually stays within a range of about 15%-20% of the total caseload, consistent with national rates. Girls accounted for 17% of our First Time Entrants in 2023-24.

It is recognised that girls can have different needs and experiences from boys, requiring differentiated responses from YJS workers. Worker allocation decisions are taken carefully to be sensitive to each girl's needs. During 2024-25 a thematic case audit will be undertaken to review our work with girls and to identify areas for improvement.

DCYJS caseload information shows that children in the local youth justice system are likely to have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. In February 2024, 37% of school-age children on the caseload had an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further 25% had the status of 'SEN Support'. This means that 62% of school-age children were identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, compared to about 20% in the local populations for their age group. These concerns fit with evidence collected by the DCYJS Speech and Language Therapists, showing high levels of

communication needs amongst children in our local youth justice system and indicating the need for YJS workers to adapt their work to the needs of each child.

6.2. Prevention

The rate of children entering the justice system is influenced by the effectiveness of local prevention and diversion activities. 'Prevention' refers to work with children who have been identified as being at risk of going on to commit offences in future if they do not receive additional help. 'Diversion' describes the response to children who have committed an offence but who can be diverted from the justice system.

DCYJS does not directly undertake prevention work. Each of our local authorities provides early help services, working with other local organisations like schools, the Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team and the voluntary sector.

In the Dorset Council area oversight of prevention activities sits with the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, supported by more detailed work at locality level. The DCYJS Manager is a member of the Strategic Alliance and team members participate in locality meetings to identify and respond to children at risk. 'The Harbour' is a Dorset Council multi-disciplinary service which works with children who need additional support to prevent negative outcomes such as being taken into care or entering the justice system. DCYJS and The Harbour have close links, including joint work with children who have entered the justice system.

In the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area, preventative work occurs within the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Early Help. Both services use local data to determine the needs in the area and to then provide preventative services to meet those needs. Governance for the Community Safety work sits with the Community Safety Partnership Executive Board. The Board's role includes scrutiny of the work undertaken. It can also agree to commission further services. The YJS Head of Service sits on the CSP Executive board. Targeted early help services are overseen by the Early Help Strategic Board (a multi-agency partnership which also incorporates Family Hubs). The Board agrees what services may be needed and which to provide/ commission. Services are provided based on the *Continuum of need*, with clear pathways in relation to how to access the support and services.

The YJS Partnership Board has agreed funding for an additional prevention project in 2024-25. Money has been allocated to pay for a Speech and Language Therapist and a Speech and Language Assistant. Their work will focus on children who are at risk of school exclusion, using a model which has been developed successfully in Milton Keynes.

6.3. Diversion

Diversion work is undertaken locally on a partnership basis. Dorset Police, DCYJS and local authority Early Help services meet weekly as an Out of Court Disposal Panel to decide the appropriate youth justice outcome for children who have committed criminal offences. The panel looks for opportunities to divert children from a formal justice outcome when possible. This fits with the local priority to reduce First Time Entrants, described above in section 4.2.

Diversion activities usually involve additional support for the child and, when appropriate, some form of restorative response in respect of the criminal offence. The Dorset Police Safer Schools and Communities Team, Early Help Services, Children's Social Care Services and DCYJS each provide support at the diversion stage. The appropriate service for each child is decided on the basis of the child's needs, risks and existing relationships with professionals.

During 2023/24 a total of 228 children received diversion options for a criminal offence, instead of a formal justice outcome. 118 of them received interventions from the Youth Justice Service. 110 received interventions from other services, principally the police Safer Schools and Communities Team or the local authority Turnaround workers.

During 2022/23 the Ministry of Justice announced a new programme, 'Turnaround', aimed at 'children on the cusp of the youth justice system'. Locally we have used this programme to divert children from the justice system and to reduce our rate of First Time Entrants. Instead of potentially receiving a Youth Caution, children are considered for an informal response which is recorded by the Police as 'Outcome 22' (No Further Police Action but with support provided to the child).

Turnaround funding has been used to recruit targeted youth workers in each local authority and a part-time Speech and Language Therapist. Each child on the Turnaround programme is allocated to one of the local authority Turnaround workers who works with the child and their family to agree a support plan to help them avoid further offending. The aim is to build the child's positive identity and reduce the risk of further offending. The Speech and Language Therapist assesses the child's communication needs and provides advice for the child, their family and professionals about the child's individual needs and how best to respond to them.

The local Turnaround programme is overseen by a multi-agency group of operational managers, reporting to the Youth Justice Service Partnership Board and submitting the necessary quarterly returns to the Ministry of Justice. Data up to the end of December 2023 shows a total of 73 children have worked with the Turnaround programme (28 in Dorset and 45 in BCP).

The Ministry of Justice exclude Children in Care and children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan from the Turnaround programme. It is important that these children are not denied the opportunity to be diverted from the justice system. Our local commitment is to ensure that these children also receive the Outcome 22 diversion option, receiving support from the Youth Justice Service instead of the local authority Turnaround workers.

Funding for the Turnaround programme will end in March 2025. The YJS Partnership Board is starting consider plans for taking forward diversion work when the Turnaround programme ends.

6.4. Education, Training and Employment

Children in the youth justice system are less likely to stay in mainstream schools, to achieve good educational outcomes and to access education, employment or training after Year 11.

In February 2024, 37% of school-age children on the caseload had an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further 25% had the status of 'SEN Support'. There are also likely to be other children whose additional needs have not been identified.

During 2023/24, DCYJS worked with local authority colleagues to establish accurate recording and reporting of school exclusions experienced by children on the caseload. In February 2024, 20 out of 96 school-age children on the caseload had been permanently excluded from school in the past 2.5 academic years, and 50 out of 96 had experienced a fixed-term exclusion during that period. In total, 54% of school-age children had experienced a permanent or fixed-term exclusion during the past 2.5 academic years, with some of them experiencing multiple exclusions.

Improving education provision and outcomes for children in the youth justice system is one of our strategic priorities.

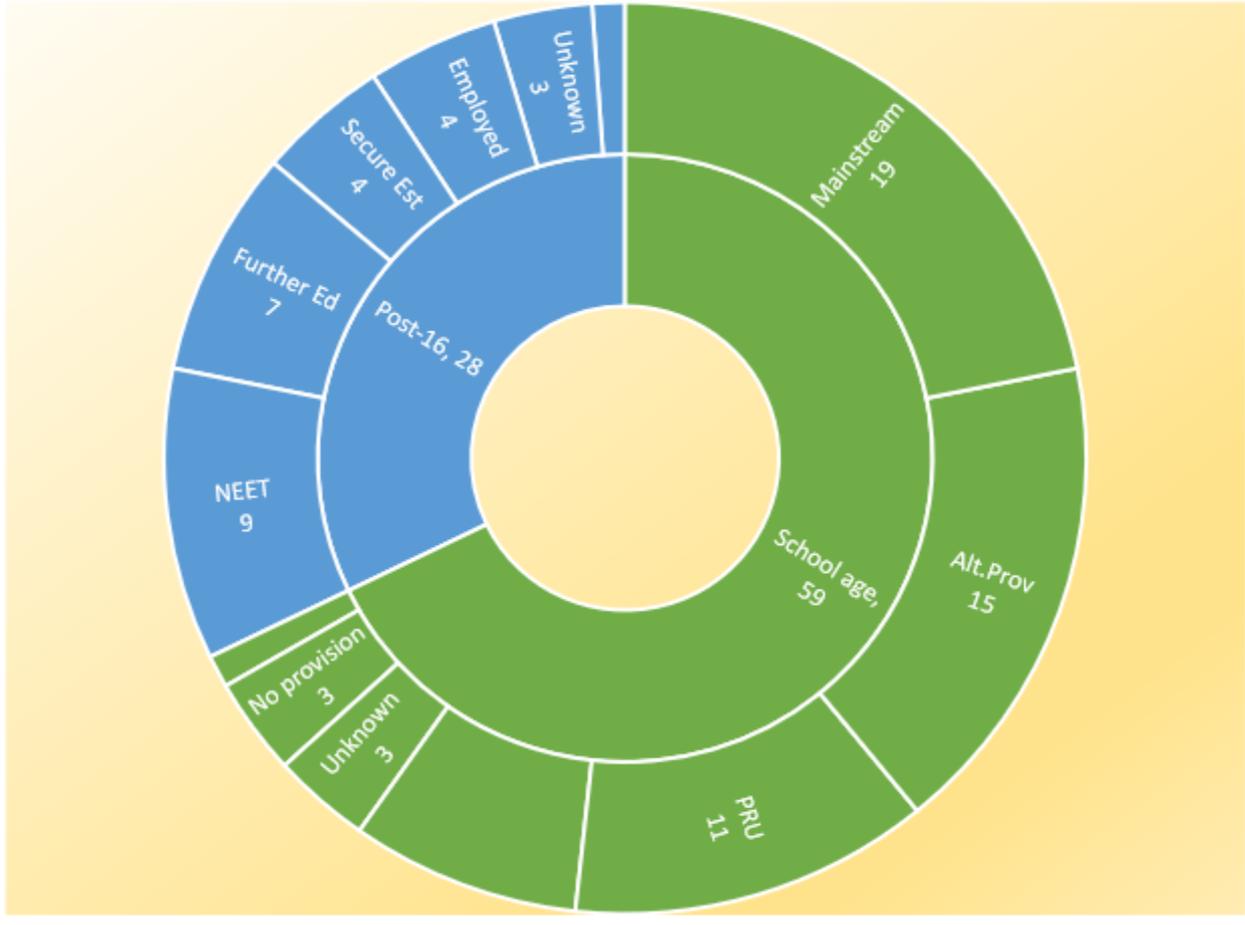
Each local authority's Director of Education is a member of the DCYJS Partnership Board.

DCYJS employs an Education Officer and a post-16 Careers Adviser. They provide advice to DCYJS case managers and work directly with young people to understand their needs and to support their attendance and engagement. They also work with schools and local authorities to increase the suitability of provision, maintaining strong links with colleagues in the local authority Virtual Schools, the SEND teams and Inclusion services.

During 2023/24 DCYJS developed its collection, recording and use of education information for each child. We have established consistent monthly processes with our local authority business intelligence colleagues for cross-referencing information about the child's education offer, attendance, history of school exclusions and special educational needs and disability. This enables us to target our interventions and resources for individual children while also providing the overview of education needs for our caseload.

The following charts show the education status of BCP and Dorset children on the YJS caseload in March 2024:

BCP - ETE Status - 31st March '24



Dorset - ETE Status - 31st March '24



These charts show the numbers of children who are not in mainstream school or in suitable employment or training. The service also monitors more detailed information, such as the number of hours offered and attended for each child, the social care and SEND status of these young people, to enable a focused response by our education specialists, working alongside relevant local authority colleagues.

Each local authority has a multi-agency group which monitors and acts on inclusion in education for the school-age children causing most concern in respect of their access to education. The DCYJS Education Officer attends these groups and represents the needs of children who are open to the YJS.

DCYJS occasionally works with children who are receiving Elective Home Education. The YJS Education Officer follows up each case where a child receives Elective Home Education to review the adequacy and safety of the arrangement and to offer more support if needed.

The numbers of young people who not in employment, education or training (NEET) or in employment without training reflects the limited opportunities for YJS young people, who can lack the necessary attainment levels to access the available provision. Actions taken in 2023/24 to address this gap include:

- The 'Discover You' project, run jointly with Upton Country Park, to increase young people's readiness for post-16 training and employment options.

- Funding provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for young people to train for the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS card).
- Increased use of AQA awards to certificate learning from activities undertaken during young people's contact with DCYJS.

Securing the funding for the Discover You project will be a priority for 2024-25.

6.5. Health Needs of Children in the youth justice system

Evidence shows that children who have contact with the justice system are likely to have significant health needs, including difficulties with mental health, physical health and substance misuse. DCYJS has a strong health team, reflecting the commitment of NHS Dorset and Dorset HealthCare to meeting the health needs of children in the youth justice system. The DCYJS health team is comprised of 2.8 full-time equivalent CAMHS nurses, a 0.8 Clinical Psychologist and 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists.

The health professionals in the YJS work directly with children and provide consultation and advice to YJS colleagues and other professionals. Their specialist skills and knowledge underpin the DCYJS commitment to trauma-informed practice and our application of the Trauma Recovery Model.

There is increasing recognition of the neuro-diversity of children in the youth justice system. Two YJS nurses have been undertaking additional training in issues relating to ADHD, including the potential overlap between indications of ADHD and responses to past trauma.

Access to ADHD assessments varies according to the child's home area. If a child also has mental health needs requiring CAMHS support, an ADHD assessment can be accessed via CAMHS throughout the county. Paediatricians can provide ADHD assessments for children who are not open to CAMHS. In the west of the county paediatricians provide ADHD assessments for all children, but paediatricians in the east of the county only provide ADHD assessments for children under the age of 16. Children who are 16 or 17 in the east of the county, and not open to CAMHS, are therefore unable to access an ADHD assessment. YJS Nurses have been working with several children in this position, flagging the issue with NHS managers and commissioners. This will continue to be a priority in 2024/25.

During 2023/24, Dorset HealthCare and NHS Dorset have been reviewing the provision of services to meet the needs of young people in respect of both speech and language needs and mental health and emotional wellbeing. The DCYJS health team is actively participating in these transformation plans and will continue to do so during 2024/25.

6.6. Restorative Justice and Victims

Alongside the 'Child First' approach, Restorative Justice is a core principle underpinning the work of DCYJS. Our whole service training in 'Working Restoratively' in January 2024 included a focus on how restorative work fits with and supports a trauma-informed, child first approach.

In the words of Jo Berry, a restorative justice practitioner whose father, Sir Anthony Berry MP, was killed in the IRA Brighton bombing, “when people use violence, they often don’t see the humanity of the person, which is what allows them to do it. What often happens with restorative justice is that it rehumanises each side”.

Whenever DCYJS work with a child whose offence harmed a victim, the DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners contact the victim to find out about the impact of the offence and to explain the opportunities for Restorative Justice activities. These contacts help us to meet our obligations under the Victims Code.

Delays in the youth justice system, which are more common in cases that go to court, make it harder to engage victims in activity to repair the harm they have experienced. Contacting the victim many months after the offence requires tact and sensitivity, emphasising the victim’s choice in whether or how much they engage with our service.

The DCYJS Restorative Justice Practitioners sometimes receive negative feedback from victims about the decision-making process and outcomes for children who receive Out of Court Disposals. Managers from DCYJS and Dorset Police met in March 2024 to review these concerns and to amend the processes for keeping victims informed and considering their views in the decision-making process.

One element of the team’s Restorative Justice work is undertaking ‘reparation’ activities with young people, to help them make amends for their offence. Examples include making wooden planters or bird boxes to be sold for charities chosen by the victim. Other young people work on community projects supported by the service or on conservation activities. During 2023/24 the service strengthened its joint work between case managers and our reparation supervisor, to tailor each activity to the needs of the child and the wishes of the victim. The aim is to increase the child’s sense of doing something constructive and meaningful to repair the harm caused.

Not all offences have a direct victim. We began work in 2023/24, which will continue in the coming year, to develop restorative responses for offences like weapon possession and drugs possession. Linked to this, we have partnered with the Red Cross to provide First Aid awareness sessions for young people.

Last year’s Plan reported on progress in developing a restorative response for children who commit offences against police officers and other emergency workers. This approach will be extended in 2024/25 to include a reparation project at Bournemouth Hospital, alongside ongoing work with the YJS Police Officers who can meet with young people to help them understand the human impact of offences against emergency workers.

6.7. Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

Tackling extra-familial harm and reducing serious violence are priorities for strategic partnerships in both our local authority areas (as described in section 2 of this Plan).

During 2023 the YJS completed a case audit to review its work with children who commit offences with weapons. The focus on weapon offences reflected evidence of an increase in these offences in both local authority areas. The audit included the views of children,

parents and YJS practitioners and led to changes in our risk planning and interventions for children who committed weapon offences.

DCYJS uses the 'Trauma Recovery Model' in its work. One of the benefits of this approach is to understand and respond to the issues which may underlie a child's exploitation or their use of violent behaviour. DCYJS appointed a 'Trauma Champion' to participate in the YJB's South West network of trauma champions and to lead the service's work in this area, working with the DCYJS Psychologist. Although the NHS England funding for the Trauma Champion post ended in March 2023, the service has continued to resource this important role.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021 introduced a Serious Violence Duty for specified authorities, including youth justice services, to work together to share data and knowledge, allowing them to target their interventions to prevent serious violence. The Duty came into effect at the end of January 2023. The specified authorities in Dorset and BCP agreed to use our two Community Safety Partnerships to lead this work. DCYJS contributed to the Serious Violence Needs Assessment in each local authority, and to the subsequent action planning.

One of the obstacles to effective work with children who have committed serious violence offences is the length of time that can elapse between the offence and the child appearing in court. This is a priority area for the DCYJS Partnership Board, with the aim of reducing delays and of mitigating their impact by offering voluntary YJS contact with young people while their alleged offences are under investigation. The YJS Head of Service has also raised this issue with the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, to add performance monitoring for the time between the offence and the charging decision to the Board's performance information.

Extra-familial harm occurs across the pan-Dorset area, with DCYJS seeing higher rates of exploitation and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals amongst its BCP Council caseload. DCYJS plays an active role in the partnership arrangements in both local authority areas to address child exploitation, participating in strategic and tactical groups as well as other multi-agency initiatives such as the 'Missing, Exploited, Trafficked' (MET) Panel in BCP Council and the Dorset Council Extra-Familial Harm (EFH) panels and the EFH Champions group. The EFH Strategy has been reviewed in each local authority during 2023/24, with some amendments to documentation and procedures. YJS practitioners and managers will participate in multi-agency training as part of the implementation of the new arrangements.

6.8. Policing and Detention of children in police custody

DCYJS and Dorset Police work actively in partnership. As well as the seconded police officers in the YJS, there is active police representation on the DCYJS Partnership Board. At an operational level there is daily contact between YJS Team Managers and the Sergeant in the police Youth Justice team.

In 2023 Dorset Police published its 'Child Centred Policing Strategy 2023-25' which "sets out Dorset Police's commitment to provide children and young people with a first-class policing response that is child-centred and part of an integrated and effective partnership

approach. This means we will put the voices and needs of children and young people at the heart of the services we deliver to make them safer”.

A ‘Voice of the Child Scrutiny Panel’ oversees the operational implementation of the strategy. The YJS Head of Service is a member of this panel, along with police leads from across the force.

One area of mutual priority is the need to speed up investigations of alleged offences by children. This is particularly the case for more serious offences which are likely to go to court and which may include public protection risks. Agreeing a joint approach to this issue is a priority for 2024-25.

Dorset Police is committed to reducing the numbers of children who are detained in police custody, as part of its Child-Centred Policing Strategy. A multi-agency group, led by the DCYJS Head of Service, monitors and addresses the use of police custody for children. The aim of the group is to reduce the number of children being arrested and, when an arrest is appropriate, to reduce the time the child stays in custody.

Data on child arrests is also reported to the YJS Partnership Board. The following table shows the child arrests in Bournemouth, Weymouth and Poole during 2023/24.

2023/24	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Auth Detention	30	40	44	29	37	25	42	31	33	30	21	17
Det Not Auth	7	4	2	5	2	3	2	5	1	4	8	12
10-13 Y/O	5	1	4	0	0	1	3	1	2	1	3	0
Overnight	15	12	18	8	13	14	16	14	15	10	10	5
Strip searches / Clothing Changes	0	0	1	3	0	3	0	0	4/3	3/1	0/2	1/0
Remand/warrant	1/2	1/1	0/2	1/1	1/1	1/0	0/2	0/2	2/1	0/2	1/1	1/2

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Ave time 2023/24	12.47	11.63	10.73	11.7	12.1	10.6	12.5	11.8	13.8	11.1	13.0	9.2

The number of child arrests in Dorset has declined in the past 3 years, with an average of 42 child arrests per month in 2021/22, 36 per month in 2022/23 and 32 in 2023/24. The reduction in child arrests is particularly positive in comparison to the increase in adult arrests.

Custody managers have strengthened the challenge on whether the detention is justified, with a notable increase in ‘Detentions not Authorised’ in the February and March 2024. This means a child has been brought to the custody suite but the custody sergeant has refused to authorise the detention. In February and March 2024, custody sergeants refused to authorise 20 of a possible 58 detentions.

Although there has been less progress in reducing the duration of child detentions, the overall reduction in arrest numbers means that arrests tend to reflect more complex cases, potentially requiring longer detention periods. Dorset Police have changed their

approach to custody arrivals during the evening to reduce the numbers that are detained overnight.

The multi-agency group has previously identified a number of factors which can prolong a child's detention in police custody, including the availability of Appropriate Adults (AAs) and the time of day when the child arrives in the custody suite. The timeliness of Appropriate Adult attendance has improved since the service was commissioned externally from 'The Appropriate Adult Service' (TAAS), though average arrival times in 2023/24 dropped to 39 minutes at Bournemouth, 39 minutes at Poole and 58 minutes at Weymouth. The longer times at Weymouth reflect intermittent shortages of available Appropriate Adults. TAAS have recruited additional Weymouth AAs in March 2024, which should reduce the average arrival times.

When the police remand a child, ie charge them with an offence and refuse to grant the child bail, there is a legal requirement (under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) to transfer the child to local authority accommodation until their appearance at the next available court. A child arrested on a warrant or for breaching bail must remain in police custody. In recent years, BCP Council and Dorset Council have operated a joint arrangement whereby a foster carer is on standby each night to accommodate a child in this situation. Usage of this foster placement has been very low, partly reflecting the very few remands of children in police custody (9 instances in 2023/24 across both local authorities). The standby foster carer arrangement is currently under review, with alternative options being considered.

6.9. Transitions to Probation

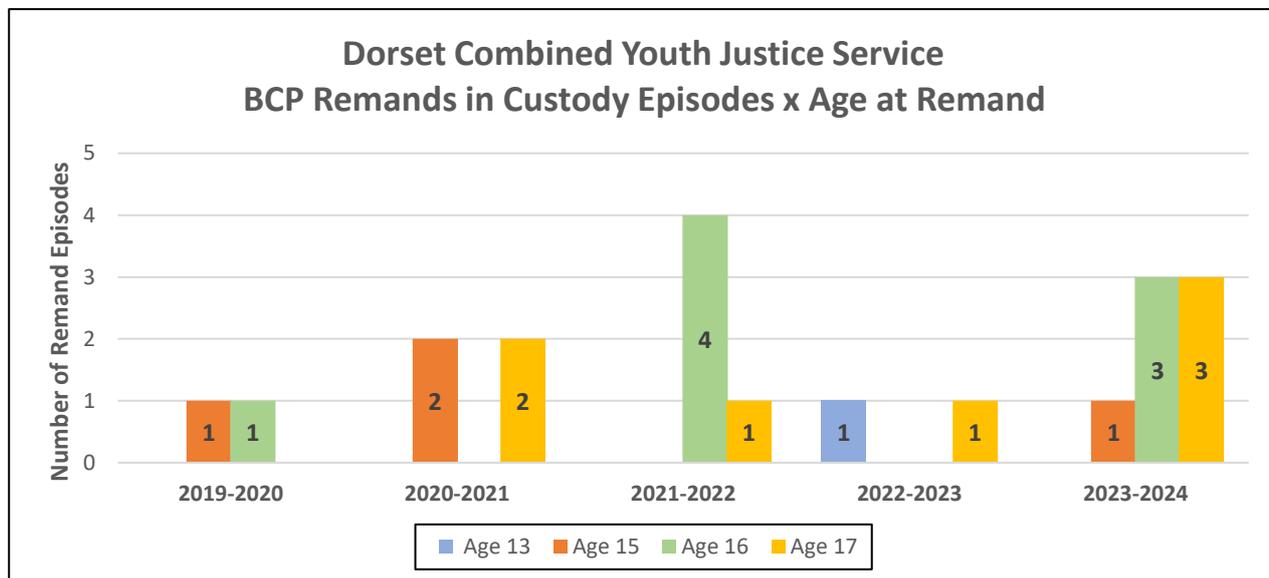
The seconded Probation Officer in DCYJS plays an important role in supporting transitions for young people who are moving from the YJS to Probation. In the last two years we have been working to improve the transition arrangements. Progress in 2023/24 included:

- New process for Probation to request YJS information for young adults committing new offences who were previously known to YJS. 125 requests for information were made under this process during 2023.
- Extending the transition process for young people transferring from YJS to Probation, with additional joint meetings.
- Training session delivered by the YJS Speech and Language Therapist to Probation staff to help them respond to the communication needs of young adults.
- YJS attendance at MAPPA Level 2 or 3 meetings for new cases aged 18-21 when the YJS previously supervised the young person.

During 2024-25 we plan to develop our methods for gathering feedback from young people about their experience of the transition process. We will also seek the views of practitioners in the YJS and Probation, to identify further opportunities for improvement.

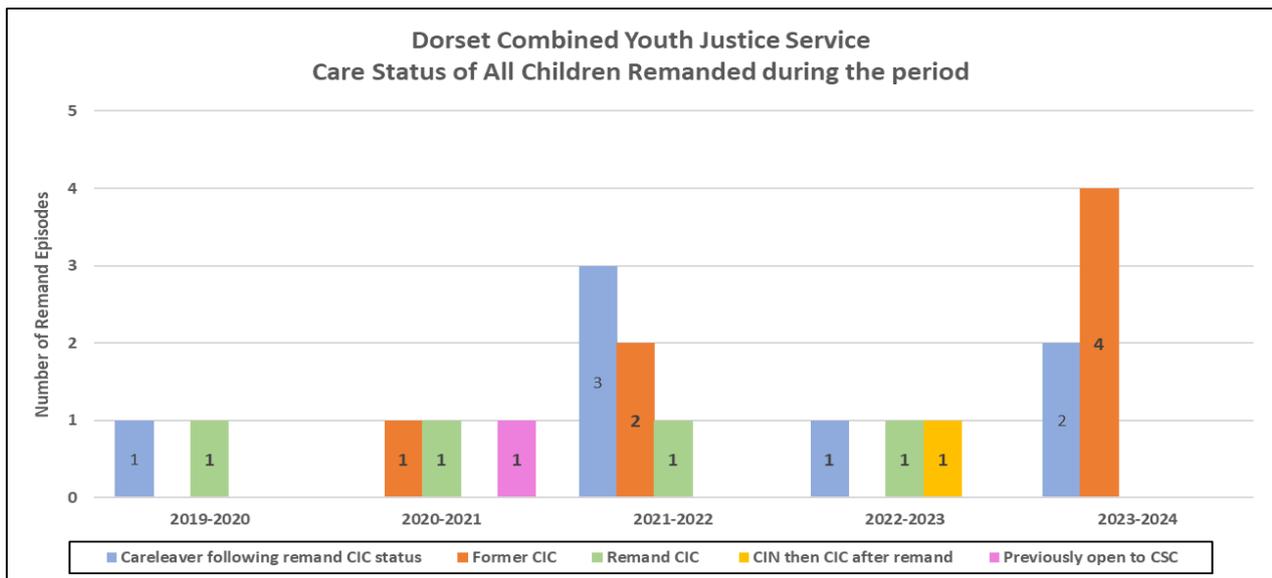
6.10. Remands

There were 7 episodes of children being remanded in custody during 2023-24, up from 5 in 2022-23 and matching the 7 episodes in 2021-22. There were also 5 instances of children being remanded into the care of the local authority in 2023-24. The following charts show the age of children remanded to custody from each local authority in recent years:



Each remand in custody is reviewed in team meetings to consider if alternative options could have been taken. In most cases the remand decision reflects the seriousness of the alleged offence, and may also reflect patterns of offending and previous non-compliance with bail conditions. Although it can be difficult to find suitable accommodation for children at risk of custodial remand, this was not identified as a factor in the remand decisions in 2023-24.

Children who are remanded in custody gain ‘child in care’ status if they are not already a child in care. In many cases the child is already known to Children’s Social Care in some capacity, as shown in the following chart:



In November 2023, HMI Probation published a thematic inspection report on work with children subject to remand in youth detention. Recommendations from this report will be included in the DCYJS plans for 2024-25.

6.11. Custodial Sentences and Resettlement

Six local children received custodial sentences during 2023/4 (compared to 7 during 2022-23). Information about custodial sentences and analysis of the young people is included in section 4.2 of this document.

In recent years very few children have been released from custody before their 18th birthday. With low numbers going into custody, and some not being released before becoming adults, the approach to resettlement for each child is planned individually.

Finding suitable accommodation for children leaving custody can be challenging. DCYJS contributes to local authority care planning processes, promoting the early identification of the child's release address. The DCYJS Manager reports to the DCYJS Partnership Board on the timeliness of accommodation being confirmed for children being released from custodial sentences. This measure is also now included in the new youth justice Key Performance Indicators. The release address for children leaving custody is sometimes not confirmed until the last few days before release. As well as causing the child a lot of anxiety and distress, this makes it difficult to plan the child's resettlement, affecting access to education, health care and constructive activities.

'Release on Temporary Licence' (ROTL) is an option for children nearing the end of their time in custody. Day releases for specific purposes are agreed, for children with good behaviour records in custody, to help prepare them for release. DCYJS have worked with a secure establishment in 2024 to confirm ROTL plans for a child who is approaching his release date.

In September 2023 some young people in custody raised concerns with their YJS case managers about the safety and adequacy of the arrangements for their detention. They reported spending 23 hours a day, or more, alone in their rooms, without access to social interaction or normal education provision. The YJS Head of Service followed up these

concerns with the Youth Custody Service (YCS) and with the Governors of the establishments. The YJS Partnership Board and the local Safeguarding Children's Partnership also sought assurances from the YCS and from YOI Governors. Improved scrutiny and joint working with the YCS and secure establishments has been developed and will continue to be monitored in 2024-25.

6.12. Working with Families

DCYJS Parenting staff provide support to the parents and carers of children on the YJS caseload. Support can be provided under a Parenting Order but in practice it is always achievable on a voluntary basis. Most contact is provided on a one to one basis, focusing on communications, relationships, setting boundaries and applying consequences. The workers remains alert to risk and safeguarding issues, attending multi-agency meetings and supporting parents in their interactions with other services.

Parenting workers, and other YJS practitioners, remain alert to the needs of other children in the household, making referrals for support from other services when necessary.

DCYJS parenting staff also run Parent Forums which enable parents to meet others experiencing similar issues and to share ideas and experiences. Guest speakers, such as the YJS Speech and Language Therapist, sometimes attend in response to requests from parents.

Plans for 2024/25 include development of the Parent Forums and increased attendance by parenting workers at court hearings and panel meetings to support parents.

6.13. DCYJS Priorities and Plans for 2024/25

The following table shows the priorities and plans for DCYJS in 2024/25. This is a dynamic plan which will continue to be updated, recognising that other priorities will arise during the year.

DCYJS Partnership Priority	Area for Development	Partners and Staff Providing Support	Benefits
Reducing First-Time Entrants	Plan and implement the project to meet the communication needs of children at risk of school exclusion	Dorset HealthCare BCP Council and Dorset Council education services Schools and PRUs DCYJS SALTs and Head of Service	Reduction in school exclusions and future offending
Reducing First-Time Entrants	Agree plans for diversion options after the Turnaround programme ends	Dorset Police BCP Council and Dorset Council Children's Services	Maintain the success in diverting children from formal justice outcomes

		DCYJS HoS and Team Managers	
Serious Violence and Extra-Familial Harm	Regular scrutiny meetings between Police CPS and YJS to track and progress delayed investigations	Dorset Police CPS DCYJS managers	Improved timeliness for offences reaching court.
Serious Violence and Extra-Familial Harm	YJS staff to attend multi-agency training for new EFH documentation and processes	Safeguarding Children Partnership All DCYJS practitioners and managers	YJS staff understand and use the amended EFH procedures to reduce EFH to children
Reducing over-representation	Undertake case audits of YJS work with girls and with black or mixed heritage children	DCYJS practitioners and managers	Identify strengths and areas for improvement to better meet the needs of minority groups on the YJS caseload
Reducing over-representation	Find out about anti-racist practice in youth justice and apply the learning	DCYJS Board members, managers and practitioners	Anti-racist practice leading to better work with children from minority ethnicities
Improving education outcomes	Secure funding to continue the Discover You programme	DCYJS funding partners DCYJS HoS DCYJS Education Officers	Improving young people's readiness for post-16 ETE options
DCYJS practice improvement	Implement the new Prevention and Diversion assessment tool	DCYJS managers and practitioners	Compliance with YJB directive
DCYJS practice improvement	Increase feedback from young people and practitioners about the transition from YJS to Probation	Probation DCYJS managers and practitioners	Identify and apply improvements to the transition process
Restorative Practice	Develop reparation options for drug possession and knife possession offences	DCYJS Reparation manager and staff DCYJS case managers	Improving children's insight into the harm caused by weapon and drug offences
Custody and remand	Implement relevant recommendations from the thematic inspection of work with children on remand	Dorset Council and BCP Council Children's Social Care Dorset Police Courts Dorset HealthCare DCYJS managers and case managers	Avoidance of unnecessary secure remands. Improved outcomes for children who are remanded in custody.
Custody and remand	Active monitoring, and reporting to YJS Board, of safety of children in custody	Dorset Council and BCP Council Children's Social Care Dorset HealthCare DCYJS managers and practitioners	Improved outcomes for children in custody
Health needs of children in the YJ	Seek solutions to the issue with ADHD	NHS Dorset Dorset Healthcare	Equal access to ADHD assessments and

system	assessments for 16+17 year-olds I east of the county		response to neuro-diversity needs
Develop the collection and use of performance information.	Continue to improve data accuracy, presentation, analysis and use	BCP Council and Dorset Council business intelligence teams DCYJS Performance and Information Manager, HoS and Performance Analyst	Earlier and more accurate identification and response to child-level and system-level improvement needs.

7. Sign off, submission and approval

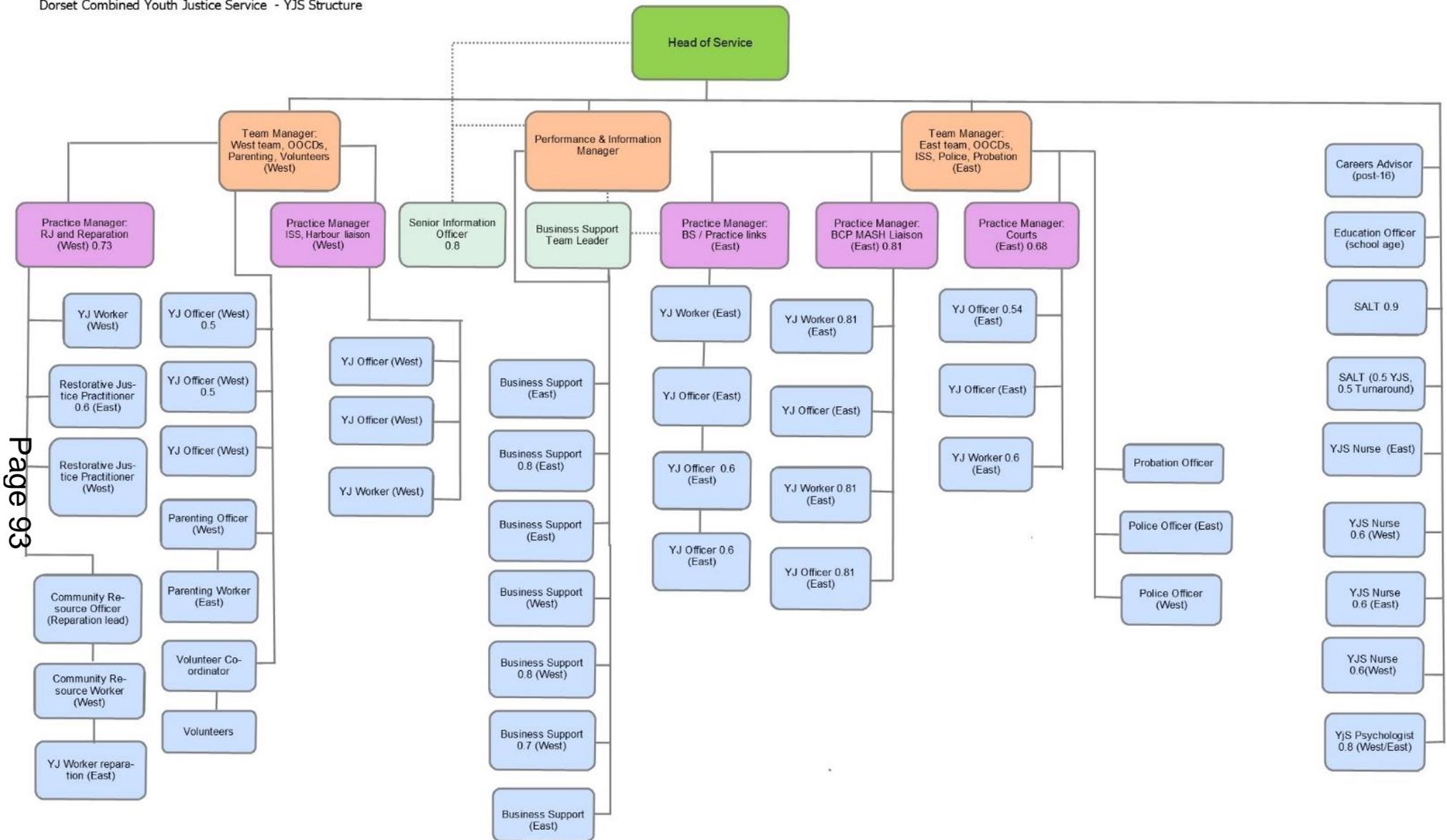
This Youth Justice Plan has been approved by the YJS Partnership Board in April 2023.

In accordance with 'Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000', Youth Justice Plans must be approved by the full council of the local authority. This Youth Justice Plan is subject to the scrutiny and approval processes of our two local authorities. It will be considered for approval by the full council of Dorset Council on 13/07/2023 and by the full council of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council on YYYY.

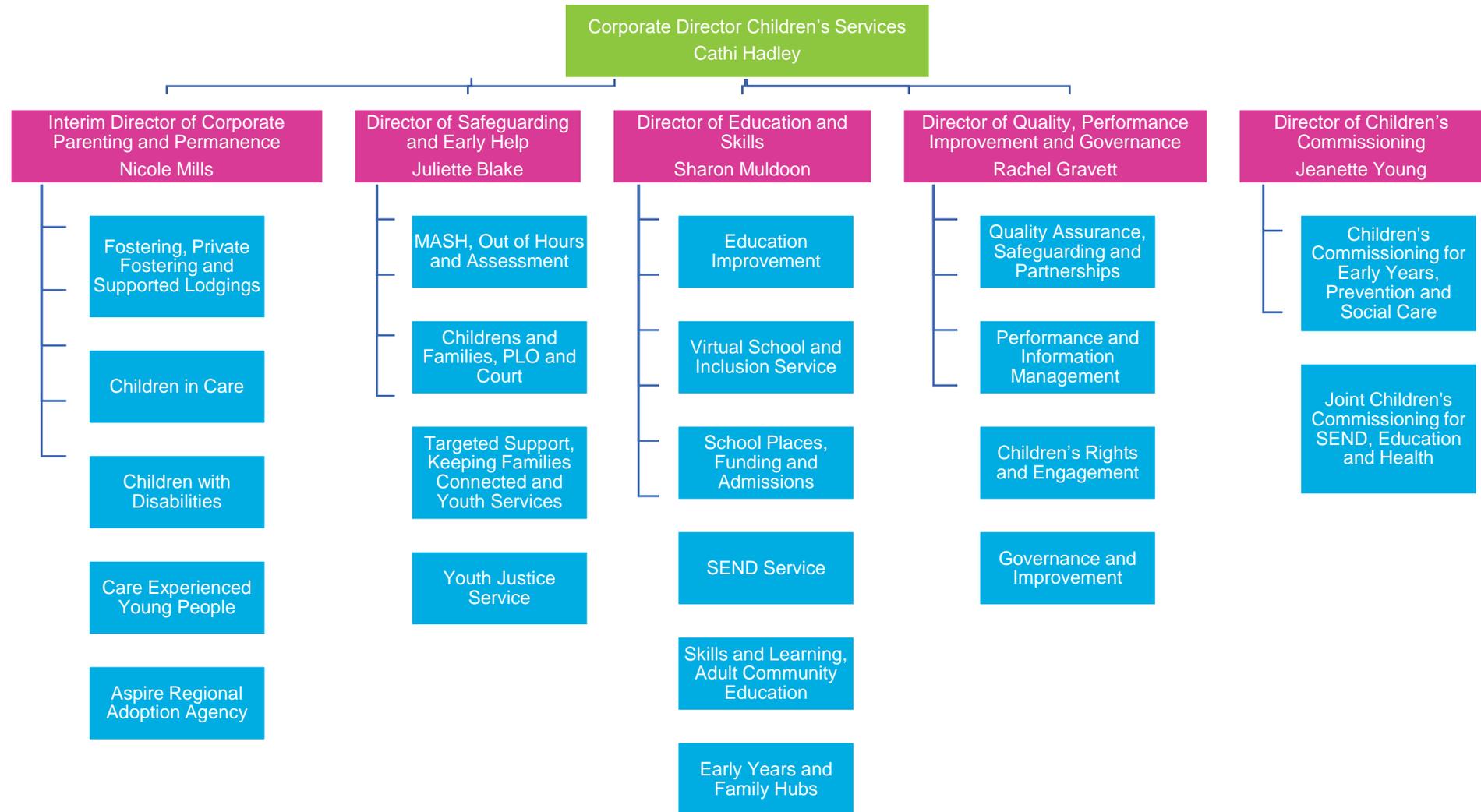
Chair of YJS Board - name	Theresa Leavy
Signature	
Date	

8. Appendix 1 – Service Structure Chart

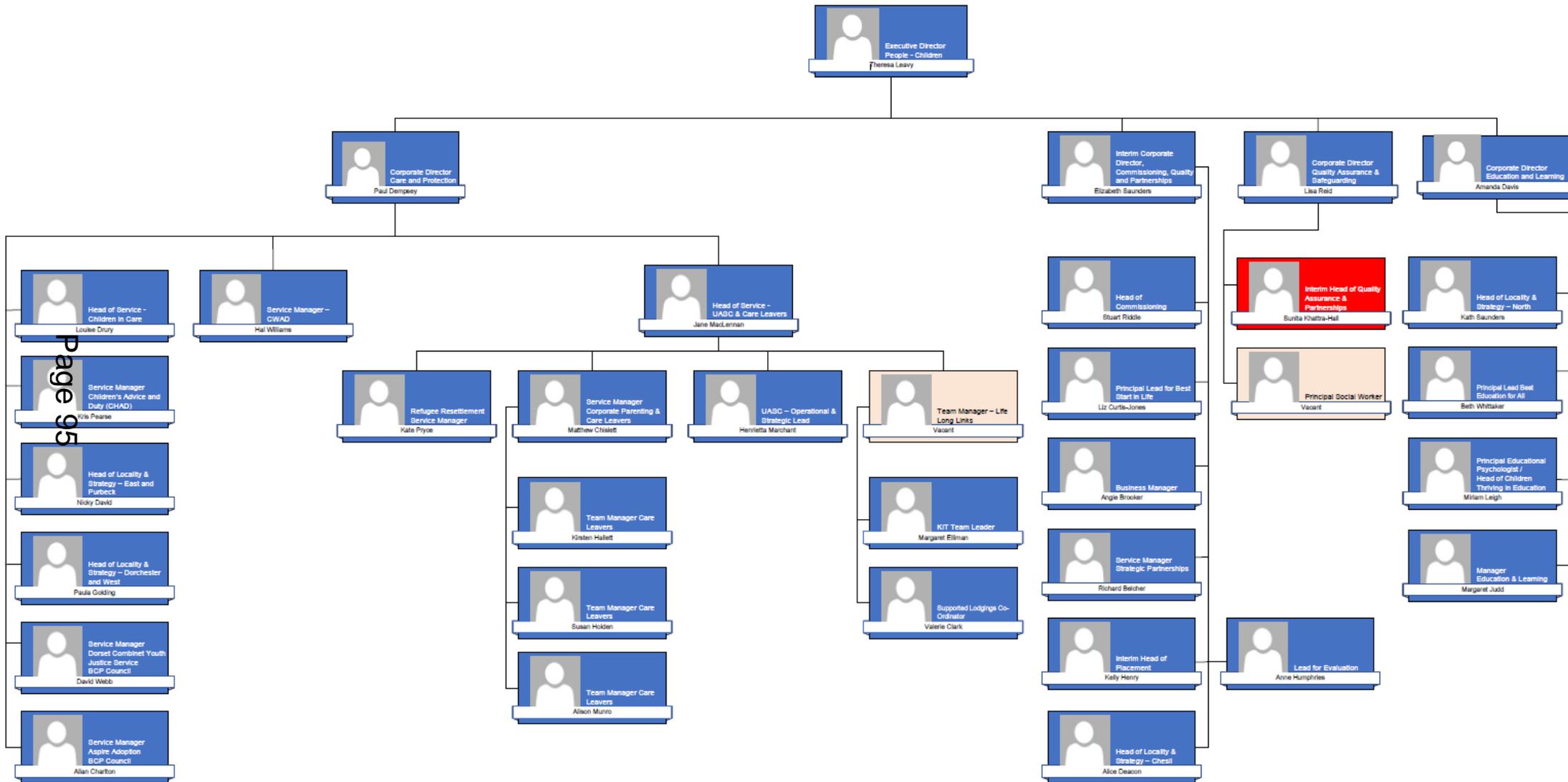
The following structure charts show the staffing structure of Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service and where the service sits in the two local authorities.



BCP Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team



Dorset Council Children's Services Extended Leadership Team



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DCYJS Staff and Volunteers:

The following table shows the gender, ethnicity and disability status of DCYJS staff members and volunteers:

YJS Staff at 13th March 2024

	Male	Female
White British	10	43
White Irish	1	0
White Other	0	1
Mixed	0	1
Prefer not to say	0	1
	11	46

YJS Volunteers at 13th March 2024

	Male	Female
White British	8	15
White Other	1	1
	9	16

Five staff members in DCYJS are recorded as having a disability.

9. Appendix 2 – Budget Costs and Contributions 2023/24

Partner Agency	23/24 Revenue (excluding recharges)	Staff
Dorset Council	£536,164	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£628,529	
Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner	£81,927	2.0 Police Officers
The Probation Service (Dorset)	£5,000	1.0 Probation Officer
NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group	£22,487	2.8 FTE Nurses, 0.8 Psychologist, 1.4 Speech and Language Therapists
Youth Justice Grant	£756,753 + additional £7,965 top-up	
Total	£2,038,825	

10. Appendix 3 – New Youth Justice ‘Key Performance Indicators’ – Indicative YJB Dashboard

Key performance indicators (KPIs)

These new KPIs have been developed to reflect on the areas that are strategically important in delivering effective services for children.

The following documents are useful when using this dashboard:

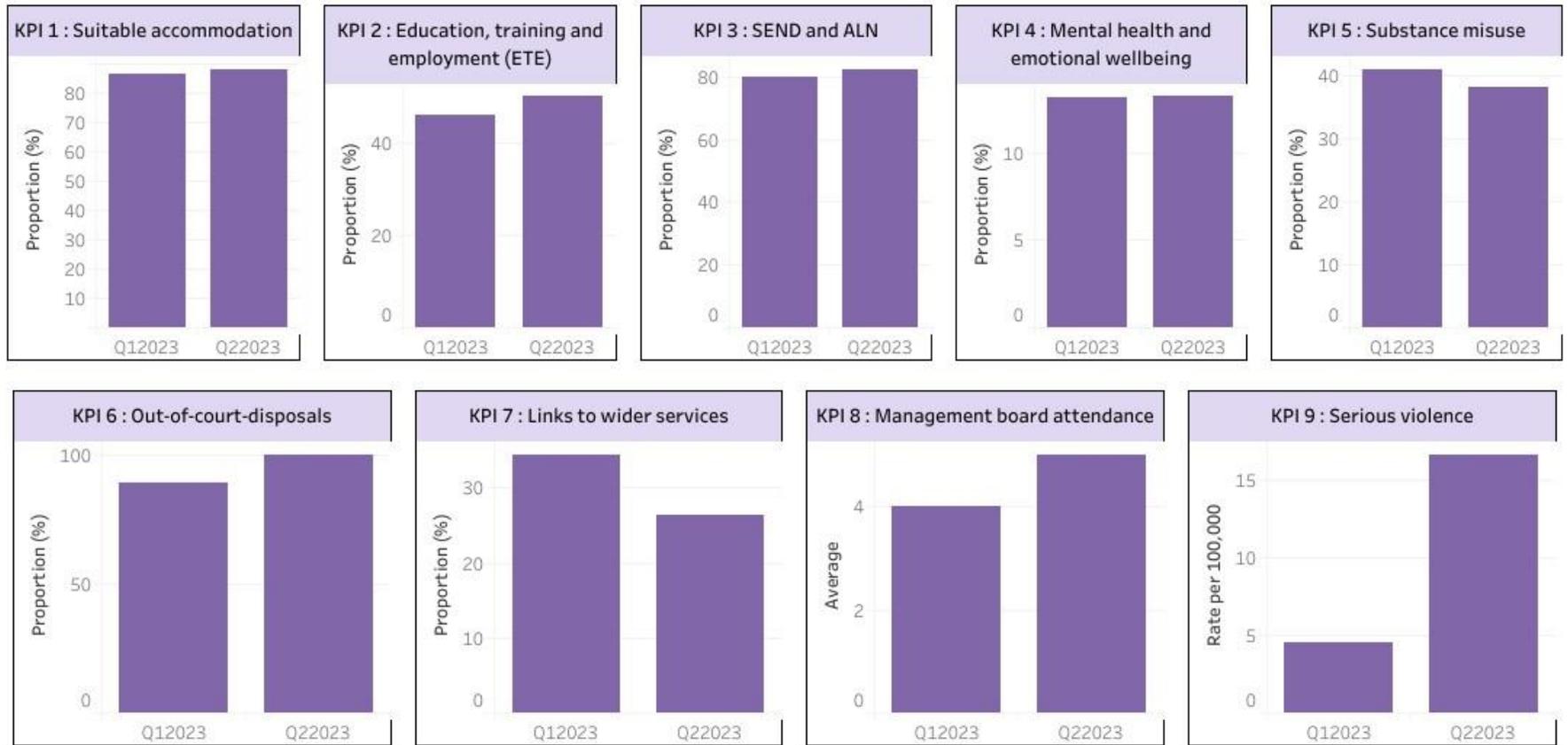
- 1. [KPI technical guidance and KPI Variables](#) - both available on YJAF.
- 2. [KPI recording guidance](#)

The filters below can be used to filter the data by Operations Area and/or by YJS.

YJB Operations Area
South West

YJS
Dorset Combined YOS

Summary Dashboard



Common youth justice terms – national glossary

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health and life outcomes
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, Intervention and Moving on; an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenets to this approach which should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child looked-after, also Child in Care	Child Looked After/Child in Care; where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	Community resolution; an informal disposal, administered by the police, for

	low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan; a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training or employment
EHE	Electively home educated; children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education other than at school; children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPP	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
SLCN	Speech, Language and communication needs

STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
Young adult	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
YJS	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
YOI	Young offender institution

Recommendation to Council

18 July 2024

From Audit and Governance Committee 8 July 2024

Enhanced DBS Checking

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Jonathan Mair

Title: Director of Legal & Democratic

Tel: 01305 225021

email: jonathan.mair@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

That Full Council adopts the Disclosure and Barring Service Checks for Councillors Policy.

Reason for Recommendation

To create a clear expectation that all councillors will undergo enhanced DBS checks and to provide an appropriate framework within which the Chief Executive, other relevant chief officers and relevant group leader will act in the event that they become aware of matters of concern about a councillor.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – report to the Audit & Governance Committee 8th July 2024

Appendix 2 – appendix 1 to the original report – draft Disclosure and Barring Checks for Councillors Policy.

Background papers

None.

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Audit and Governance Committee

8 July 2024

Enhanced DBS Checking

For Recommendation to Council

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s):

All Councillors

Executive Director:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Jonathan Mair

Job Title: Director of Legal & Democratic

Tel: 01305 838074

Email: jonathan.mair@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

Brief Summary:

Individually Dorset Council councillors occupy positions of great trust in their communities. Councillors also have oversight and responsibility for a range of people based services delivered to the most vulnerable, in particular services to children and vulnerable adults. All Dorset Council councillors are corporate parents of looked after children.

Towards the end of the term of the last council, political group leaders supported the Chief Executive and the Director of Children's Services in introducing an expectation that all councillors should be the subject of enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking. Previously councillors were the subject of basic DBS checks and the move to enhanced checking of councillors with responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults was in line with recommendations made by Simon Bailey in his national review of the DBS.

All current Dorset Council councillors have completed enhanced DBS applications and we are waiting for the last few certificates to be returned by the DBS. The membership of the Council will though change over time and it is

important that the Council, as an organisation which takes its safeguarding duties seriously, should create the clearest expectation that all councillors will undertake enhanced checks. It is also important that the Council should have a clear policy about what should happen in the event that checks disclose the existence of offences by a councillor or police intelligence about a councillor.

Recommendation:

That the Committee recommend to the Full Council adoption of the Disclosure and Barring Service Checks for Councillors Policy.

Reason for Recommendation:

To create a clear expectation that all councillors will undergo enhanced DBS checks and to provide an appropriate framework within which the Chief Executive, other relevant chief officers and relevant group leader will act in the event that they become aware of matters of concern about a councillor.

1. **Financial Implications**

No direct financial implications.

2. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

None.

3. **Well-being and Health Implications**

None.

4. **Other Implications**

Reputational, for individuals

5. **Risk Assessment**

5.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk:Low

6. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

This report raises no equalities implications.

7. **Appendices**

Draft Disclosure and Barring Service Checks for Councillors Policy.

8. Background Papers

None

9. **Report Sign Off**

- 11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

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Disclosure & Barring Service Checks for Councillors Policy

INTRODUCTION

In the report of his Independent Review of the Disclosure and Barring Regime (18 April 2023) Simon Bailey QPM, DL, CBE recommended to government that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is made mandatory for all councillors in unitary and upper tier local authorities who are being considered for appointment to any committee involved in decisions on the provision of children's services or services for vulnerable adults.

Pending a change in the law to implement mandatory enhanced checking Mr Bailey, who was previously the National Police Chiefs Council Lead for Child Protection, recommended that local authorities should voluntarily introduce enhanced checks.

As part of the Council's commitment to keeping everyone safe, (especially children and vulnerable adults) and the Council's commitment to maintaining the highest standards in public life this policy expects that all Dorset Council councillors will undergo enhanced level DBS checks. The policy also sets out what steps will be taken in the event that offences are disclosed through a positive DBS certificate.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Dorset Council Councillors and to co-opted members of the Council.

Councillors are elected and can only be removed from office if they become disqualified or are removed from office by order of a court. Until there is a change in the law the Council cannot compel a councillor to undergo DBS checking. Nevertheless, this policy establishes a clear expectation that all councillors must agree to undergo checks. The Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer will work with political group leaders to reinforce this expectation.

A co-optee will be required to undergo enhanced level DBS checks if they are a member of a committee or board which discharges any education or social services function of the Council. For other co-options the Council will assess on a case-by-case basis the role into which a person is being considered for co-option in order to determine whether any DBS check is required.

AIMS

- to protect those who councillors work with
- to maintain the highest standards in public life
- to provide clarity about what should happen in the event that offences are disclosed through a positive certificate.

WHAT IS AN ENHANCED DBS CHECK

A DBS check is a criminal background check, usually carried out before a person takes on a new role. Such checks can help to verify that the person is of good character, has no previous convictions that may make them untrustworthy and that they do not pose a risk to the safety of other people.

An enhanced check will disclose any spent and unspent convictions, cautions, warnings, and reprimands. It may also disclose additional relevant police notes and information about the person.

The position held by a councillor is very different from that of an employee. For relevant types of employment a DBS check will form part of pre-employment checks. An unsatisfactory DBS check will result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment. However, provided a councillor qualifies to stand for election, is not disqualified from holding office and is duly elected then information later disclosed through an enhanced DBS check will not on its own result in them losing office.

One of the disqualifications from holding office as a councillor arises if a person has within five years before the day of election or since election been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on them a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine.

Enhanced DBS checking might establish that a councillor who, whilst no longer disqualified from office, has longer than five years before, committed offences that make them unsuitable for appointment to certain roles within the Council or to outside bodies.

As a result of more recent disqualifications introduced by the Local Government (Disqualifications) Act 2022 a person is disqualified from being elected or being a member of a local authority in England if they are subject to certain notification requirements or orders relating to sexual offences and the prevention of sexual harm. There may be circumstances in which a person is not the subject of such an order and is not therefore disqualified but an enhanced DBS check might identify them as having committed historic offences.

PROCESS TO BE FOLLOWED

Within two months of election a councillor is expected to have completed an enhanced DBS application and to have supplied all necessary supporting information.

Councillors will be asked to sign up to the DBS updating service. The costs of applying for an enhanced DBS check and the updating service will be met by the Council.

The process of applying for DBS checks will be overseen by the Monitoring Officer and administered in Democratic Services. The relevant group leader will be informed of progress and any delay by a member in prioritising the completion of their DBS check.

After their application has been processed by the DBS the councillor will be provided with a certificate issued by the DBS. The Council (Democratic Services) will be notified of the disclosure and whether the DBS check is clear.

Where a DBS check is not clear, for instance, it contains details of an offence, the Councillor will be asked to provide a copy of the DBS certificate to the Monitoring Officer within 7 days of the date of issue of the DBS certificate.

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997 disclosure information will only be passed to those people who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Democratic Services will maintain a record of the date a check was requested, the date a response was received and a record of all those to whom the disclosure or disclosure information has been revealed together with any other relevant information. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

In the context of councillors those authorised, in addition to the Monitoring Officer, to receive disclosure information will include the relevant Political Group Leader, the Chief Executive, relevant Executive Director and in a case involving potential children's safeguarding concerns the Local Authority Designated Officer known as the LADO.

THE USE OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

The existence of a criminal record or other information revealed as a result of an enhanced DBS check will not necessarily debar a Councillor from holding office. Only if the information demonstrates that the councillor is in fact disqualified from office would they cease to be a councillor.

If the disclosure information received raises issues of concern, the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and the relevant Executive Director, in consultation with the relevant Group Leader, will discuss with the individual Councillor in confidence the roles that they perform as a councillor, the committees and outside bodies on which they serve and their arrangements for ward work/surgeries. The focus of these discussions will be:

- any concerns related to safeguarding children and adults and
- whether any offences involving dishonesty make the councillor unsuitable to serve in certain roles.

The Monitoring Officer has delegated authority, in consultation with the relevant Group Leader to make in year changes to the membership of committees and boards.

POLICY REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed as part of readiness for the induction of new councillors following elections to be held in May 2029 or earlier in the event of any changes in the law to reflect the recommendations of the Simon Bailey review of the DBS.

Recommendation to Council

18 July 2024

From Audit and Governance Committee 8 July 2024

Planning and Licensing Committees

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Phil Crowther & Lara Altree

Title: Legal Business Partner – Regulatory and Senior Solicitor

Tel: 01305 225021

email: Philip.crowther@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk and
lara.altree@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

1. That Full Council is asked to amend the Officer Scheme of Delegation in the Constitution to change the process for determining which planning applications are referred to the planning committees (as shown with tracked changes in Appendix 1);
2. That Full Council is asked to amend the Protocol for Members and Officers on Planning Procedures in the Constitution by amending paragraph 8.2 as set out Appendix 1;
3. That any changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegation take effect on 25 July 2025;
4. That Full Council agrees to amend the Constitution by renaming the Licensing Committee as the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee, creating a separate

General Licensing Committee and substituting Articles 8.28 and 8.29 of the Constitution with new Articles 8.28-8.31 as set out in Appendix 2;

5. That the Chair, Vice-Chair and other Members of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee are also appointed to the General Licensing Committee;

6. That sub-committees of the two licensing committees can be formed as and when needed from the membership of the relevant licensing committee.

Reason for Recommendation

1 & 2 To enable the Council to be a more open organisation and give ward members and parish councils a greater involvement in deciding which planning applications are considered by the planning committees

3 So that and changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegation do not affect any consultations under the Officer Scheme of Delegation which have already begun at the time of Full Council.

4 & 5 It is appropriate to have two separate licensing committees, one dealing with the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 and one to deal with other licensing matters

6 to allow greater flexibility in appointing Members of the two licensing committees to licensing sub-committees

Appendices

Appendix 1 – report to the Audit & Governance Committee 8th July 2024

Appendix 2 – appendix 1 to the original report – proposed changes to paragraph 134 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation and Protocol for Councillors and Members dealing with Planning Matters

Appendix 3 – appendix 2 to the original report – proposed changes to Article 8 of the Constitution for Licensing Committee

Background papers

None.

Audit and Governance Committee

24 June 2024

Planning and Licensing Committees

For Recommendation to Council

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:
Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): All Councillors
Cllr

Executive Director:
J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Authors: Philip Crowther and Lara Altree
Job Title: Legal Business Partner – Regulatory and Senior Solicitor
Tel: 01305 225108 and 01305 838219
Email: philip.crowther@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk and
lara.altree@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Planning Delegations

Currently, if a Dorset Council ward member submits a representation or a parish or town council submits a representation contrary to the officer's proposed recommendation, a nominated officer decides, in consultation with the relevant planning committee chair, vice-chair and ward member whether the application should be referred to the planning committee (instead of the application being decided by an officer with delegated powers).

In order to give ward members and parish and town councils a stronger voice in triggering the referral of an application to a planning committee changes are proposed to the Officer Scheme of Delegation. If approved these changes would result in all applications for major development to which a Dorset Council ward member or a town or parish council submits a representation which is contrary to the officer's proposed recommendation being referred to planning committee for decision. For other development not already subject to an automatic committee

referral, it is proposed that where a Dorset Council ward member or a parish or town council has made a representation contrary to the officer's proposed recommendation, the decision to refer an application to committee would rest with the relevant planning committee chair and/or vice chair, in consultation with the relevant ward member(s), as part of agenda management. If the chair and vice-chair disagree it is suggested that the chair's view prevails. It is also suggested that the Council's own applications and applications on Council land are treated in the same way as other applications, rather than being automatically referred to committee.

Licensing Committees

The Council has licensing functions under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 and different additional licensing functions under other legislation. As such, it would be appropriate to have two separate committees, one dealing with Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 matters and one dealing with all other licensing matters.

Recommendation:

1. That Full Council is asked to amend the Officer Scheme of Delegation in the Constitution to change the process for determining which planning applications are referred to the planning committees (as shown with tracked changes in Appendix 1)
2. That the Committee considers the proposed amendments to the Officer Scheme of Delegation for referring planning applications to the planning committees shown highlighted and with tracked changes in Appendix 1 and resolves whether to ask Full Council to also make those changes
3. That Full Council is asked to amend the Protocol for Members and Officers on Planning Procedures in the Constitution by amending paragraph 8.2 as set out Appendix 1.
4. That any changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegation take effect on 25 July 2025.
5. That Full Council agrees to amend the Constitution by renaming the Licensing Committee as the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee, creating a separate General Licensing Committee and substituting Articles 8.28 and 8.29 of the Constitution with new Articles 8.28-8.31 as set out in Appendix 2.
6. That the Chair, Vice-Chair and other Members of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee are also appointed to the General Licensing Committee

7. That sub-committees of the two licensing committees can be formed as and when needed from the membership of the relevant licensing committee.

Reason for Recommendation:

- 1, 2 & 3 To enable the Council to be a more open organisation and give ward members and parish councils a greater involvement in deciding which planning applications are considered by the planning committees
- 4 So that and changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegation do not affect any consultations under the Officer Scheme of Delegation which have already begun at the time of Full Council.
- 5&6 It is appropriate to have two separate licensing committees, one dealing with the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 and one to deal with other licensing matters
- 7 to allow greater flexibility in appointing Members of the two licensing committees to licensing sub-committees.

1. Planning Delegations

- 1.1 The Council received 4209 planning applications (not including other applications such as for pre-application advice or notifications under permitted development rights) in the last year (to 31 March 2024). The Constitution sets out which planning applications are determined by the planning committees and which are determined by officers. Even if an application is delegated to officers, officers can nevertheless refer the application to a planning committee if they consider it appropriate.
- 1.2 The current criteria for deciding which applications are decided by the planning committees is set out in paragraph 134 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation. The first broad category of applications which are decided by the planning committees is where the application is made by a Member, a Chief Officer, an officer involved in processing or deciding planning applications, or by a spouse/civil partner of one of those people, or whether the application is on land owned or leased by any of those people or their spouse/civil partner. It is not proposed to change that position.

- 1.3 The second broad category is where a ward member or parish/town council has made a representation on an application containing a material planning consideration and which, in the case of a town/parish council is contrary to the proposed officer recommendation. Currently, the ward member and relevant committee chair and vice-chair are consulted about whether the application should be referred to the relevant planning committee by the Proper Officer (Head of Planning, Service Manager for Development Control and Enforcement or relevant Area Manager). Following that consultation, the Proper Officer decides whether to refer the application to the planning committee. It is suggested that this referral process is changed as summarised in paragraph 1.7 and in detail in Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The third broad category is where the application is made by the Council or is on Council owned land. Currently, all of these applications are referred to the planning committees. It is suggested that the Council's own applications are treated in the same way as other applications as set out in paragraph 1.6 and Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Consideration has also been given to whether all applications which are contrary to the Development Plan and where the officer is recommending approval should be referred automatically to the planning committees. Officers consider that the benefits of doing that are less clear and so the Committee is asked to consider the issues set out in paragraph 1.8 before deciding whether to recommend the highlighted changes in Appendix 1 to Full Council.
- 1.6 It is proposed to move to a more member-led referral process to the planning committees. First, all applications for major development (10 or more houses, building of 10,000 sq m or more, sites of 1ha or more, and all minerals and waste development) would be referred to planning committees if a ward member or town or parish council has made a representation which is contrary to the officer's proposed recommendation. For all other planning applications falling under paragraph 134 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation, if a ward member, town or parish council submit a representation within the 21 day consultation period which contains material planning considerations and is contrary to the officer recommendation, the relevant committee chair and/or vice chair would be able to refer the application to committee.
- 1.7 The Council has set time periods for making decisions on planning applications. The Government sets targets that a certain percentage of

applications must be decided within that time period, or within an agreed extension of time. If the Council does not meet the target the Government can remove the Council's power to decide planning applications referring them instead to the Planning Inspectorate (known as 'special measures'). There is also a risk of fee refund if the application is not determined within 16 or 26 weeks, and a risk of non-determination appeals if extensions of time are not agreed. As a result, it is proposed to keep the 5 day response time for Chairs and Vice-Chairs to decide that an application should be referred to committee failing which the decision can be taken by officers.

- 1.8 Currently, only applications which are considered to be contrary to the development plan as a whole and are required to be referred to the Secretary of State are automatically referred to Committee. An alternative could be to automatically refer these applications to planning committee if the officer is recommending approval. However, this approach could lead to ambiguity as it is often a question of planning judgement as to whether the application is contrary to the development plan. It could also lead to a delay in decision making with the consequences as set out in paragraph 1.7 and resource implications for the Planning Service if a greater number of applications are referred to Committee. Officers consider that the proposed changes set out in paragraph 1.6 without the highlighted changes in Appendix 1 provide sufficient transparency to ensure that applications which are contrary to the development plan are referred to planning committee where appropriate.

2. Licensing Committees

- 2.1 The Council has licensing functions under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 and licensing functions under different legislation, for example taxi licensing. Advice has been received that it would be appropriate to have two separate committees, one dealing with Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 matters and one dealing with all other licensing matters.
- 2.2 Since the formation of Dorset Council, the Council's Licensing Committee has exercised all of the Council's licensing functions. However, given the advice received, it is recommended that the Licensing Committee's functions are split so that they are in line with the Licensing Act 2003 requirements.

- 2.3 There is no requirement for the two committees to have different membership. As a result, it is recommended that the members of the Licensing Committee (renamed the Licensing and Gambling Act Committee) are also appointed to the new General Licensing Committee. That will mean that there is no need to train additional members to sit on the new committee. It also means that both committees can meet on the same day with one committee meeting following the other. That will mean there is no additional pressure on Members' diaries.

3. **Licensing Sub-Committees**

- 3.1 Currently the Constitution requires that named members of the Licensing Committee are appointed to licensing sub-committees annually at the first Licensing Committee held after the annual Council meeting. It also requires sub-committees to sit in rotation where more than one is appointed.

- 3.2 Licensing sub-committees are held to consider applications and licence reviews which often have to be held at short notice to comply with statutory timescales. As a result, members of the sub-committees are often not available and substitutes have to be found.

- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that sub-committees of the two licensing committees can be constituted from the membership of the relevant licensing committee as and when a sub-committee is needed to hear a licensing matter. The proposed change to the Constitution is set out in Appendix 2.

4. **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report

5. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

There are no climate implications associated with this report

6. **Well-being and Health Implications**

There are no well-being and health implications associated with this report

7. **Other Implications**

There are no other implication associated with this report

8. **Risk Assessment**

- 8.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk:Low

9. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

This report does not impact on any equality and diversity issues

10. **Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – proposed changes to paragraph 134 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation and Protocol for Councillors and Members dealing with Planning Matters

- 10.2 Appendix 2 – proposed changes to Article 8 of the Constitution for Licensing Committee

11. **Background Papers**

None

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Officer Scheme of Delegation

134	<p>To determine any application under the Town and Country Planning Legislation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. any application submitted wholly or partly under section 73 and/or section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; b. any application for listed building consent; c. any application for permission in principle and/or technical detail consent; d. any reserved matter application; and/or e. whether to require / impose any condition, obligation, limitation and/or any other restriction and/or any other requirement in respect thereof, <p>but excluding any application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. submitted by or on behalf of a Member, his/her spouse or civil partner where the application form expressly identifies the application as having been made by or on behalf of that Member, spouse or partner (as the case may be); ii. submitted by or on behalf of an employee of the Council, his/her spouse or civil partner where the application form expressly identifies the application as having been made by or on behalf of that employee, spouse or partner (as the case may be) and either that employee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. is directly involved in the processing of and/or determination of any such application; and/ or B. is a Chief Officer. iii. submitted by or on behalf of the Council or on land owned by the Council, where the application form identifies this to be the case. iv. on land which a person to which paragraph (i) <u>or</u> (ii) or (iii) applies owns, leases or has a legal interest registered at HM Land Registry and that person has informed the Head of Planning of their interest for the application; v. submitted by or on behalf of the Council where the application form identifies this to be the case; vi. that would in the opinion of the Officer exercising this power ("nominated Officer"): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. be contrary to the Development Plan (as defined in section 38(3) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 when assessed as a whole if and B. be required to be referred to the Secretary of State in accordance with any relevant direction; vii. for outline or full planning permission for development within Schedule 1 Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 as it exists at the time of the application being received by the Council in respect of which an Environmental Impact Assessment has been submitted; and/or viii. in respect of which <u>where</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) any one or more Members has made a written representation relating to the application and there remains at least one representation which has not been withdrawn at the time that the application is to be determined; and/or, (2) one or more town and/or parish councils in whose area the application is situated (in whole or part) have made a written representation relating to the application at least one of which has not been withdrawn at the time that the application is to be determined; and B. the representation(s):
-----	---

- (1) have been received by the Council within 21 calendar days beginning with the date on which in relation to the application the Council first displays a site notice, or first publishes a press advert, or commences any procedure for notifying a Member (whichever is the earliest) (or such extended period as the nominated Officer considers appropriate in the circumstances); and
- (2) in the opinion of the nominated Officer contain one or more material planning considerations; and
- (3) ~~with regard to any received from a Town and Parish Council (and not withdrawn)~~ contain a response that in the opinion of the nominated Officer is contrary to the proposed decision of Officers; and

C.

1. The application is for major development *** or
- ~~2. If the application is not for major development *** the~~ nominated Officer ~~in consultation with~~ will refer the application to:
 1. ~~the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee~~ the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee that the nominated Officer considers most relevant ~~(or any other Member as the Chair and/or Vice-Chair may by giving written notification to the nominated Officer appoint to act on his/her behalf for such a purpose in respect to any period of time as specified in such notification); and~~
 2. ~~the ward member(s) of any ward in which the application site is situated in whole or part, considers ought to be referred to that Planning Committee for determination***, and the Chair or the Vice-Chair, in consultation with the relevant Ward Member(s), will decide whether or not the application should be determined by the most relevant planning committee ****~~

* For the avoidance of doubt, reference to a "written representation" includes a representation submitted by electronic means.

** For the avoidance of doubt, reference to a "proposed decision" means the actual decision that is proposed and not any reason(s) relating to that decision.

*** Major development as defined in article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015.

**** For the avoidance of doubt, ~~the nominated Officer need only consider such response(s) as have been received from a Member (being if the Chair and Vice-Chair, appointed Member and/or ward member(s) as the case may be), no later than have not responded to the nominated Officer after 5 working days following the day of first communication with that Member seeking his/her view for the purpose of deciding whether a matter should be referred to Planning Committee for determination. In the event of no responses at all being received within such time then no further consultation is required and the nominated Officer can proceed on the assumption that none of the Members consulted neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair want the application to be referred to a planning committee. If the Chair and Vice-Chair disagree then the Chair's response will prevail.~~

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Protocol for Members and Officers on Planning Procedures

8.2 Applications submitted by the Council or made by any person in respect of Council owned land will be determined by the Planning Committee in the same way as any other application.

Appendix 2

LICENSING AND GAMBLING ACTS COMMITTEE

8.25 Role/Terms of Reference and Membership

(a) The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee shall be the licensing committee of the Council for the purposes of exercising any functions expressly referred to a licensing committee by the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.

(b) The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee may also deal with certain other matters which are referred to it having regard to provisions in the Licensing Act 2003 by a person or body possessing the power to make that determination.

(c) The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee will consist of 15 Members appointed by Full Council and for the avoidance of doubt Members appointed to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee may also be appointed to the General Licensing Committee.

(d) The quorum of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee shall be 3.

8.26 Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee shall be appointed by Full Council unless Full Council otherwise determines.

8.27 Meetings

(a) The number of ordinary meetings of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee each year will normally be determined by Full Council.

(b) The Chairman of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee shall have the power to call one or more special meeting(s) of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee.

(c) The Chairman of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee may determine that a meeting should be cancelled for insufficient business.

(d) No Member shall sit as a member of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee unless s/he has received licensing training provided to that Member for this purpose.

(e) There shall be no power to appoint substitutes to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee.

8.28 Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committees

(a) The membership of a Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committee shall be appointed from amongst the whole membership of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee.

(b) Each Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committee shall consist of only 3 members and the quorum of each Sub-Committee shall be 3.

(c) Substitutes may only be appointed to a Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committee from the membership of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee.

(d) For the avoidance of doubt, all Licensing and Gambling Acts Sub-Committees may exercise any powers given to them concurrently and independently of each other.

8.29 Delegated powers and powers to recommend of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee

(a) The Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee shall have the powers as set out in Functions of the Council - Part 3(1) of the Constitution in respect of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 only.

(b) For the avoidance of doubt the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee and any of its Sub-Committees can delegate any of its powers to any Officer (subject in particular in the case of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 to any limitations prescribed in that legislation).

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

8.30 Role/Terms of Reference and Membership

(a) The General Licensing Committee shall have primary responsibility for:

(i) the discharge of the Council's licensing, certification and registration functions; and

(ii) the determination of any application relating to the manufacture and/or storage of explosives; that is not dealt with through the use of any other mechanism.

(b) The General Licensing Committee will consist of 15 Members appointed by Full Council and for the avoidance of doubt Members appointed to the General Licensing Committee may also be appointed to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee.

(c) The quorum of the General Licensing Committee shall be 3.

8.26 Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the General Licensing Committee shall be appointed by Full Council unless Full Council otherwise determines.

8.31 Meetings

(a) The number of ordinary meetings of the General Licensing Committee each year will normally be determined by Full Council.

(b) The Chairman of the General Licensing Committee shall have the power to call one or more special meeting(s) of the General Licensing Committee.

(c) The Chairman of the General Licensing Committee may determine that a meeting should be cancelled for insufficient business.

(d) No Member shall sit as a member of the General Licensing Committee unless s/he has received licensing training provided to that Member for this purpose.

(e) There shall be no power to appoint substitutes to the General Licensing Committee.

8.32 General Licensing Sub-Committees

a) The membership of a General Licensing Sub-Committee shall be appointed from amongst the whole membership of the General Licensing Committee.

(b) Each General Licensing Sub-Committee shall consist of only 3 members and the quorum of each Sub-Committee shall be 3.

(c) Substitutes may only be appointed to a General Licensing Sub-Committee from the membership of the General Licensing Committee.

(d) For the avoidance of doubt, all General Licensing Sub-Committees may exercise any powers given to them concurrently and independently of each other.

8.33 Delegated powers and powers to recommend of the General Licensing Committee

(a) The General Licensing Committee shall have the powers as set out in Functions of the Council - Part 3(1) of the Constitution except in respect of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.

(b) For the avoidance of doubt the Licensing Committee and any of its Sub-Committees can delegate any of its powers to any Officer.

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Full Council 18 July 2024 Timing of Meetings

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:
Cllr N Ireland, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s):
All

Executive Director:
J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison
Job Title: Democratic Services Team Leader
Tel: 01305 252216
Email: susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Full Council is requested to approve a minor change to the time that Cabinet meetings are held throughout the year and to allow the Chairs of the People & Health Overview Committee, People & Health Scrutiny Committee, Place & Resources Overview Committee, Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee and Audit & Governance Committee the ability to change the meeting times of their committees.

Recommendation:

- (a) That, as a change to the current Calendar of Meetings all future Cabinet meetings be held at 6.30 pm;
- (b) That each of the Chairs of the 2 Overview Committees, the 2 Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee, in consultation with committee members, be given discretion to change the time of day at which their committee is to meet.

Reason for Recommendation:

To provide a consistent meeting time for all meetings of Cabinet throughout the year and for the Chairs of the Overview, Scrutiny and Audit and Governance committees each to be able to decide, in consultation with members of their committees, the most appropriate times for meetings to be held.

1. Timing of Meetings

1.1 In 2023 a cross party Member Task and Finish Group met to review the time that committee meetings were held at Dorset Council, with the aim of giving members the opportunity review the start time of meetings ahead of the May 2024 local elections and to inform the setting of the 2024/25 Calendar of Meetings. The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were initially considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 13 November 2023 ([Review of Timing of Committee Meetings .pdf](#) dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) and in December 2024 Full Council resolved to:-

- retain all Full Council meetings at 6.30pm;
- move all Audit & Governance Committee meetings from 10.00am to 6.30pm
- to hold Cabinet meetings at 6.30pm during the summer months and to hold Cabinet meetings at 2.00pm during the winter months

1.2 The new Leader of Council, Cllr Nick Ireland, who Chairs the Cabinet meetings has asked that, for the benefit of consistency, all future meetings of Cabinet are held at 6.30pm. This is a relatively minor change to the Calendar of Meetings that was set in December 2024 as only 4 meetings of Cabinet will need to switch to the new time of 6.30pm.

1.3 In addition, it is proposed that the Chairs of the 2 Overview Committees, the 2 Scrutiny Committees and Audit and Governance Committee be given the flexibility to trial different meeting times for their committees to assess which time of day would better suit members of their respective committees.

1.4 To avoid confusion going forwards and maintain an element of consistency it is suggested that Chairs adopt one of the following standardised meeting times as follows:

Morning meetings – to commence at 10.00am

Afternoon meetings – to commence at 2.00pm
Evening meetings – to commence at 6.30pm.

2. Financial Implications

No direct financial implications.

3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

N/a

4. Well-being and Health Implications

The opportunity to hold committee meetings at a more convenient time for members may improve work/life balance for members.

5. Other Implications

None

6. Risk Assessment

HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW
Residual Risk: LOW

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken for this report as the recommendations do not, at the current time, represent a significant change to the approved Calendar of Meetings.

8. Appendices

Timing of Meetings Report and Minutes of the Audit & Governance Committee 13 November 2023

[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Monday, 13th November, 2023, 11.00 am - Dorset Council](#)

Timing of Meetings Resolution of Full Council December 2023

[Covering Report from Audit and Governance Committee Timings.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)

Minutes of Full Council – 14 December 2024

[Agenda for Dorset Council on Thursday, 14th December, 2023, 6.30 pm - Dorset Council](#)

9. **Background Papers**

See appendices above.

10. **Report Sign Off**

This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

FULL COUNCIL MOTION ON NOTICE

Date of Council Meeting:- 18 July 2024

Title of Motion:- The Nature Emergency

Proposer:- Cllr Nick Ireland

Seconder:- Cllr Clare Sutton

Supported by:- Cllr David Taylor, Cllr Mike Baker, Cllr Belinda Bawden, Cllr Dave Bolwell, Cllr Sarah Williams, Cllr Simon Clifford, Cllr Steve Robinson, Cllr Richard Biggs, Cllr Gill Taylor, Cllr Claudia Webb, Cllr Scott Florek, Cllr Duncan Sowry-House, Cllr Kate Wheller, Cllr Louise Bown, Cllr Will Chakawhata, Cllr Andy Canning, Cllr Jack Jeans, Cllr Chris Kippax, Cllr Jon Orrell, Cllr M Bell, Cllr S Holland

Motion Narrative and Action Required

This council:

1. Declares that there is a nature emergency, recognising:
 - a. That nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this, that the UK is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries - in the bottom 10% globally and the worst in the G7 - and with only about half its biodiversity left that it is far below the global average;
 - b. That a thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society, that it benefits our physical and mental health, feeds us, cleans our air, moderates urban heat, alleviates flooding, absorbs carbon, makes counties like Dorset beautiful and that its survival and diversity is essential to human life;
 - c. That the nature crisis and the climate emergency are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis.

2. Notes the positive work already begun and planned by this council including:
 - d. The strategic intent as encapsulated in its Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology strategy, alongside the council's role as responsible authority for the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the county of Dorset.
 - e. The work already undertaken to promote biodiversity in the council's own country parks and greenspaces, farms, highway verges, watercourses, designated areas, woodland, local nature reserves and other natural areas.
 - f. Hosting the Dorset National Landscape Partnership and supporting its nature recovery work with a wide range of stakeholders, including coordinating the Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve partnership and the West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams catchment, and making significant investments in nature through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

3. Commits to embed nature's recovery at the heart of all strategic plans, including the forthcoming Dorset local plan, policy areas and decision-making processes, building upon the climate decision-wheel and the Nature Recovery Dorset brand.
4. Having declared a climate emergency in 2019, commits to tackling the climate and nature emergencies together and investing in nature-based solutions to the challenges posed by climate change, including mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to increased climate risk such as flooding and extreme summer heat.
5. Facilitate the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Dorset, working with farmers, landowners, businesses, organisations and NGO's so that there are agreed priorities, opportunities and reportable actions to recover nature across Dorset.
6. Set clear strategic and measurable goals for nature's recovery by 2030 and its contribution towards mitigating carbon emissions and increasing our resilience to climate change, for example:
 - a. Contributing to the national commitment to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030, in line with the UK's international commitment to biodiversity and the Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology strategy and set out in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Dorset.
 - b. Supporting the Dorset and Cranborne Chase National Landscapes to meet/exceed their apportionment of the Environmental Improvement Plan targets
 - c. Making space for nature and the long-term maintenance and expansion of the Nature Recovery Network.
 - d. Improving biodiversity on Dorset Council land including our farms, highway verge, country parks and other greenspace by, for example planting trees and hedgerows, lowering soil fertility on verges and encouraging community orchards and the establishment of allotments.
 - e. Working with farmers, landowners, town & parish councils and other external partners to improve biodiversity, increase tree cover and woodland, and green our streets.
 - f. Remove the use of glyphosate and chemicals damaging to ecosystems/nature where possible.
 - g. Reducing pressure on wildlife and developing wildlife corridors.
 - h. Improving doorstep access to nature, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those wards already identified as having the worst access to nature.

- i. Supporting communities and businesses to make better decisions and take action to support nature's recovery.
- j. Developing a strategic perspective on natural flood management solutions, working with key partners and stakeholders.

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