

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Panel
DATE	29 th January 2026
TITLE	Youth Justice Service
REASON FOR SCRUTINY	Ensuring that the service is efficient.
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CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Menna Trenholme

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

- 1.1 The Youth Justice Service (YJS) is hosted by Gwynedd Council and operates across Gwynedd and Anglesey. It is a multi-agency team that works with children and young people who are at risk of offending or have offended.
- 1.2 It is necessary to ensure that it operates efficiently and that the service has appropriate resources.

2. What needs to be scrutinised?

1. Reviewing the numbers of children being supported
2. The support given to keep young people out of prison
3. The various projects provided by the service, the challenges faced, and the successes

3. Summary and Key Issues

3.1 General

- 3.2 The Gwynedd Mon YJS is a multi-agency service, hosted by Cyngor Gwynedd Council and based in private rented offices in Felinheli. The statutory functions of the service are founded in the ***Crime and Disorder Act of 1998*** (C&D Act) and requires the service to prevent the offending and reoffending of children. The C&D Act established YJSs as a partnership requiring Local Authorities, Police, Probation and Health to work together to provide funding, resources and governance in order to ensure an effective youth justice system for the chosen area, in our case this is the 2-county area of Gwynedd and Ynys Mon.
- 3.3 As host authority for the Youth Justice Service Gwynedd Council provides; line management for the service manager, finance management, training, and development framework (available to seconded staff also) IT support and Health

and Safety for the offices and buildings. The service conducts its business and staff management under the policies and procedures set out by Gwynedd Council.

- 3.4 The service receives Strategic Oversight and Governance from Gwynedd and Ynys Mon YJ Management Board, the board consists of Heads of Service, Senior Managers and Leaders from the local partnership; Local Authority (Education and Children's Services) Health, Nation Probation Service, North Wales Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Magistrates Bench, His Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service and Youth Justice Board (YJB). The Management Board is currently Chaired by the Gwynedd Corporate Director for Social Services, chairing responsibilities rotate between the 2 local authorities. The Management Board meets quarterly and will have; finance, performance, safeguarding and monitoring improvement programmes, as standing items.

3.5 Strategic Planning

- 3.6 One of the main statutory responsibilities of the management board and the service manager is the production of the Annual Youth Justice Plan (**appendix a**). The Plan evaluates the performance of the service over the previous 12 months and measures its progress on the previous Plan and any improvement/work plans that have been initiated. It monitors the commitment and engagement of the statutory partners, which includes finance and resourcing. Our 2025-26 was submitted to the YJB/MOJ in June 2025, we received sign-off in Sept 2025, furthermore the YJB have requested permission from our Management Board to use our Plan as an example of good practice within the sector.
- 3.7 The strategic and operational business of the service involves both devolved non-devolved responsibilities, our work with criminal justice partners receives oversight, guidance and reporting to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Home Office (HO). Much of this work is coordinated through the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, who are a Public Sector Long-arm body of the Ministry of Justice. The role of the YJB is:
- 3.8 *"To oversee the youth justice system in England and Wales, with a core role to prevent children from offending by advising the government, monitoring system performance, promoting best practices, commissioning research, and ensuring secure placements for youth in custody, all under a "Child First" approach that treats children as children and prioritizes their strengths and rehabilitation."*
- 3.9 All youth court matters are heard at Caernarfon Youth and Crown Court, with the resultant extra travel burden on families to ensure attendance at Caernarfon court; this is a particular issue for families who live in some of our more remote communities where the public transport provision is limited. We have reciprocal arrangements with our colleagues in Conwy and Denbighshire and Flintshire YJSs, for youth court cover in Llandudno YC or Mold Crown should any of our children attend. When required and there is a case risk, the service will operate a standby Saturday Remand Court provision supporting our colleagues in Flintshire where the Remand Court (Mold) takes place.
- 3.10 All police custody matters are processed in Caernarfon Custody suite, again extra demands on families to attend.

- 3.11 The service has a duty to support victims of youth crime, we have a dedicated team of staff who communicate and support victims throughout the justice journey;
- 1 x Victim Liaison Worker
 - 1 x Reparation and Restorative Justice worker
 - 1 x Referral Order Coordinator
 - 1 x Senior Practitioner Victims and Restorative Justice
- 3.12 Their role is to ensure the voice of the victim is heard within justice processes and impact statements are used effectively to plan interventions and support. To keep the victim fully informed of the child's progress and outcomes. To deliver appropriate community linked restorative programmes that help the child learn about the importance of community, impacts on victims and ways to avoid crime.
- 3.13 In addition to youth justice support the service hosts the two-county Young Person's Substance Misuse Service (**Be 'dr Sgor**) and Gwynedd's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Prevention Team (**Tim Emrallt**)
- 3.14 Full staffing structure can be accessed in **Appendix a**
- 3.15 There is a specific Regional YJB team for Wales (YJB Cymru), who, in addition to the above, work to ensure alignment with Welsh Government Programming and Priorities and maintaining effective partnership arrangements in Wales.

3.16 Performance and Inspection

- 3.17 The YJB monitor the National Standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), a full list of the KPIs and the service's response to performance is outlined in sections **5** and **8** of the Youth Justice Plan 2025-26 (**appendix b**).
- 3.18 Current *Quadrant* performance grading from the YJB for our service is;
- Quadrant 2** (Good overall performance)
- *Staff participation in the Board (e.g. thematic presentations) is strong.*
 - *Partners continue to make positive and constructive contributions.*
 - *Work on OoCRs across the region is starting to show a positive impact on children.*
- 3.19 The service received a Youth Justice Standards Inspection from HMIP in November 2023, the report was published in March 2024;
- 3.20 "Overall, Gwynedd & Ynys Môn YJS was rated as '**Good**'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as '**Requires improvement**'."
- 3.21 *"The service is child focused, committed to helping children to desist from further offending. An individualised approach helps to ensure that children's diversity needs are recognised, and support put in place to help them thrive and achieve positive decision-making. Staff and volunteers are a strength. They are kind, thoughtful, work well together as one team, and are positive advocates for the children they supervise."*

- 3.22 *“The Tim Emrallt (problematic and harmful sexual behaviour) offer is excellent and making a real difference in supporting practitioners to improving children’s attitudes and behaviours. The Be di’r Sgôr (substance misuse service) provides high-quality interventions.”*
- 3.23 *“The YJS can be rightly proud of the way it reaches out to children with compassion to help them live out their best lives.”*
- 3.24 The service was required to create an Inspection Improvement Plan (IIP) in response to the 7 main findings;
1. *Ensure consistent attendance at the management board from senior education and health leaders, to achieve positive education and health outcomes for all children.*
 2. *Address the disconnect between the strategic management board and frontline practitioners.*
 3. *Address the gap in speech, language, and communication provision for children and ensure that services are provided which assess and respond to children’s communication needs.*
 4. *Improve the quality of assessment and planning work to keep children safe and manage the risk of harm they present to others.*
 5. *Ensure that management oversight is consistently effective in reviewing Asset Plus activity and contingency planning, so that practitioners are clear about what they need to improve.*
 6. *Provide practitioners with comprehensive guidance that supports the completion of effective out-of-court assessment and planning work.*
 7. *Improve the knowledge and understanding of practitioners to identify when children are being exploited so that timely action is taken to keep children safe.*
- 3.25 A copy of the IIP can be seen in (**Appendix c**), progress on the IIP is regularly monitored by YJS Management Board, with the Board committed to conduct a final review on delivery, in March 26.

4. Background / Context

4.1 Working with Children

- 4.2 The service fully supports and promotes the ‘Child First’ principle in Wales, our approach is to;
- *Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential.*
 - *Promote children’s individual strengths and capacities to develop their identity, all work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.*
 - *Encourage children’s active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their family.*
 - *Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.*
- 4.3 The service is ‘Trauma Informed’ and incorporates Adverse Childhood Experiences into our assessment and reporting processes. The service also practices the

Trauma Recovery Model as part of our intervention and support, with support from the regional Forensic Adolescent Consultation and Treatment Service (FACTS) to deliver Enhanced Case Management, where complex cases can be 'Formulated' with the assistance of a Consultant Psychologist.

4.4 Delivery

- 4.5 The Service Office base is located in the village of Felinheli about 3 miles from both Bangor and Caernarfon and utilises both public and private sector facilities for meeting children and young people, as well-as home visits. Service delivery is very much peripatetic, and this type of delivery has significant time and cost implications for staff and partnership funders.
- 4.6 The service operates 3 Pool cars (2 x cars 1 x Utility Van), cars are used by staff for community visits and the van is used for community projects including Unpaid and Reparation work. The use of pool cars helps in reducing service travel costs for a peripatetic service operating in a large rural community. We also hold a large selection of Equipment and Tools for unpaid and reparation projects; Litter collection, gardening, and general maintenance.
- 4.7 The service provides travel assistance to children and families who may otherwise struggle to attend office meetings, Court, or police meetings. The support comes in the form of Travel vouchers for local bus services.
- 4.8 The service continues to build on our extensive Interventions Packs and programmes, the Resilience Interventions (although still in research trials) joins and already well used;
- *Positive Choices*
 - *Time Out for Teenagers (Parenting)*
 - *Teen Talk*
 - *Clued-Up*
 - *Star*
 - *Family Matters*
 - *Escape (Parenting)*
 - *Olivia's Story*
- 4.9 In addition, the service holds a growing library of online resources which is informed and built on by our involvement with our Regional YJS Interventions Forum, this includes Violence and Knife crime awareness.
- 4.10 In 2025-26 the service will benefit from a very generous contribution (£16,200) from the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to purchase for 12 months the use of ***Virtual Decisions***. Virtual Decisions is a virtual reality programme that is delivered using video headsets and allows children and staff to explore different community scenarios (these can be crime or staying safe based) where children are able to interact and make decisions to change narrative and outcomes. The programme is supported by Extended Learning Packs which facilitate the interactions between staff and child, promoting improved decision making and outlining the consequences of actions.
- 4.11 The service has purchased 5 headsets with the following programmes;

- *Knife Crime*
- *Identity*
- *Influence*

4.12 Caseload Data

4.13 There are 2 main cohorts the service works with, these are;

4.14 Prevention and Diversion

4.15 The service has for the last 12 years delivered a successful and effective prevention and diversionary programme of work, in 2013 only 15-20% of our caseload was pre-court, in 2025 that figure will be closer to 80%. This significant change has been achieved through legislation, policy development and improved quality of practice delivery across the YJ Sector partnership.

4.16 In this area the service works to keep children away from the formal justice system by delivering the following;

4.17

Referred to a Prevention Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred by Schools, Yellow Card ASB (NWP), Social Services • Prevention is a support programme of targeted interventions to be delivered by a variety of agencies, but which is coordinated by the Prevention staff • Prevention is aimed at young people at risk of offending, ie: have not yet committed an offence but there may be evidence of anti-social behaviour, problematic substance use, non-attendance at school, problematic behaviour in school or at home. There needs to be several factors present for the referral to be suitable.
Turnaround Programme	<p>MOJ Funded Prevention Programme (2022-2025)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to work with children on the cusp of offending, ASB notifications, NFAs, RUIs • Strengths based interventions • 10-12 weeks intervention • Referrals and cohort numbers/outcomes monitored by national Turnaround team.
YJS/Police Decision Making Panel Out of Court Disposals Outcome 22 Outcome 8 Outcome 20 Youth Cautions (Formal Outcome)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred by the Police, in response to an offence of a gravity level of 4 or below (public order, low level assaults, criminal damage, theft, possession of class B; and others) • The Panel made up of; YJS Police Officer, a Community Volunteer, the YJS Operational Manager, YJS RJ & Victim senior Practitioner, case workers (RO coordinator). It is intended to divert young people from the court process, thereby assisting them to not to get a criminal record and to receive intervention to prevent them entering the youth justice system in future. • An assessment is completed, from which a report is produced. The young person reports to the Panel, which formulates a disposal agreement comprising of targeted interventions, which the young person agrees to. <p>There are 3 possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcome 8,22,20 - the most frequent disposal means that the young person does not get a criminal record whereas the other two mean that they do. - Youth Caution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Conditional Caution – if YP does not comply YP can be returned to court - The Intervention typically lasts up to 3 months. Where necessary this is extended and exit plans/strategies are arranged.
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4.18 Statutory Court Orders

4.19

Referral Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-12m duration • YP has an assessment, from which a report is produced. The young person reports to a Referral Order Panel, made up of community volunteers, which formulates a contract of interventions which the young person agrees to. • 3 monthly reviews, followed by a Final Review, at which the Panel decides if the contract has been fulfilled. If it has the Conviction becomes 'spent' at the end of the Order, which means that the conviction does not need to be declared to future employers (with certain exceptions). If not the rehabilitation period, before which the conviction will become 'spent', will vary as according to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. A Referral Order will appear on a DBS check. • Restorative Encouragement & enforcement through the Panel and Court • Intensive supervision and Surveillance Programme (most intensive form of community supervision/alternative to custody – 25 hrs per week) • Curfew & Electronic Monitoring (mostly for young people on ISS) • Activity requirement: usually for the YP to complete an amount of reparation hours • Unpaid work • Programme: eg: Knife Crime, Citizenship, Anger Management
Youth Rehabilitation Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-36months duration • 3 monthly Reviews with Case Manager and Interventions staff • Reviews and or Breach hearings in court • Restorative encouragement and enforcement meetings • Possible requirements: • Supervision: includes offending behaviour related work, attendance with Substance use worker, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service support •
Detention and Training Order	<p>4-24 months duration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodial sentence in Young Offender Institutions. • Periodic custodial reviews according to the length of sentence • Early Release meeting to consider whether the young person can be released early with an electronic curfew & tag • Followed by a period of supervision on licence in the community • Reviews and or Breach hearings in court • Restorative encouragement and enforcement meetings • Resettlement begins at point of sentence! • OMG will provide Resettlement Panel process when needed.
Section 250 (previously 90/91)	<p>Custody Sentence More than 24 months duration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodial sentence in Young Offender Institutions. • Periodic custodial reviews according to the length of sentence • Early Release meeting to consider whether the young person can be released early with an electronic curfew & tag

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Followed by a period of supervision on licence in the community • Reviews and or Breach hearings in court • Restorative encouragement and enforcement meetings • Resettlement begins at point of sentence! • OMG will provide Resettlement Panel process when needed.
Youth Detention Accommodation Secure Remand	<p>Should only be used by Court when absolutely necessary and when bail is refused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court should have consideration of welfare of child • YJS should propose Bail alternatives to avoid YDA's • Asset+ Bail and Remand module to be sent to YCS immediately to inform suitable placement. • A+ should focus on individual needs of Young person and highlight any risk or safety and wellbeing concerns. • YJS to schedule initial planning meeting within 5 working days. • Regular meetings to take place up to sentencing Court date. • All YDA's have looked after status – Social care to attend meetings. • We have a management group which has oversight of any YDA episodes.
Voluntary	<p>There are times when a family or the child requests extended support from the YJS beyond the terms of the court order, the service will support this where benefits are identified, or the child is in transition/experiencing significant changes.</p>

4.20 Referral/Caseload data

4.21 In the period April 2024 to Aug 2025 the service received the following referrals;

County/Intervention	Turnaround/Prevention	O22/O8	YC/YCC	Referral Order	YRO	DTO/Remand	Totals
Gwynedd	57	79	24	17	3	1	181(64%)
Ynys Mon	20	52	14	9	5	0	100 (36%)
Out of County	0	2	2	9	2	0	15
Total	77	133	40	35	10	1	296

4.22 There are currently 121 children open to the service

4.23 The YJS Management Board recently completed a comprehensive analysis of the caseload and needs the following is a short synopsis of the findings;

- I. **Gender:** We have observed an increased number of girls entering the justice system in recent years, this report indicates a reduction in numbers in the last 12-18 months, but not yet to previously low figures. However, it is pleasing to note that girls do not progress through the system at the same rate as boys. Timely and trust/relationship-based interventions seem to have a more positive affect on girls. The average age of girls is slightly higher than boys, this possible increased maturity may have a positive influence in girls success and engagement in the informal and formal Out of Court Resolutions offer.
- II. **County:** There are some significant anomalies in certain cohorts (YROs) with regards to the county split, we do occasionally observe this and normally this will be short-term or linked with group offending or police targeting (operational). In this report across the cohorts, we see a normal county referral split and when factored in to longitudinal data there are no concerns. We have seen an increased number of Out of Area children (Looked After Children

Placed in our area in Residential units), there are 15 in this sample which is a 30% increase in previous years and places additional (unfunded) demand on our service. There is a duty set out in YJB Case Management Standards that YJS will Caretake and Provide support to other LA children placed in their area who are on youth justice orders. Holyhead, Bangor and Caernarfon are the areas with highest levels of Youth Crime.

- III. **Age:** It is positive to note that there are no 10-year-olds in the caseload and those aged 11 years were in the Prevention or Turnaround cohort where no crime was linked. The OofCR cohort has a very broad age range but 75% over the age of 15yrs with evidence to suggest that work in this cohort is slowing down progression into more formal outcomes or attendance at court. In all cohorts Girls are slightly older than Boys and no significant age difference between counties. Out of area children are slightly younger in most cohorts than local children.
- IV. **Offending:** Violence remains the most common offence in all cohorts and with both boys and girls, 71% of Referral Orders had a violent offence linked. The presence of sexual offences physical and online/social media is of concern. Arson offences appear in formal court orders in relation to well publicised incidents involving several children; however, some arson incidents were criminal damage by fire and were dealt with appropriately through out of court formal sanctions and educational interventions. Knife possession offences are common across the cohorts, national and local attention on youth knife crime has contributed to police and education actions resulting in increased stop and search and response to intel. Public protection and risk management are the main consideration to decision making for possession offences with outcomes for fair and child centred. Where there is a real threat to individuals (persistent possession or threats to use) appropriate sanctions are applied unfortunately this does not have the desired effect! Section 18 wounding cases should have been avoided. Measures are in place to learn from these events and to minimise future incidents. New interventions have been sourced within the service and the service is active with CSP and partners to work with schools on preventative interventions and education programmes to spread awareness of Violence, Exploitation and Knife Possession/Crime.
- V. **Status:** The child's journey through the youth justice system is often mirrored by their journey with children's services support;

Cohort	Known to Children's Services (%)	LAC Number
Prevention & Turn	9	4
OofCR	19	11
YC&YCC	15	4
Ref Order	35	6
YRO	100	5
Custody	100	1

- VI. **Education:** There is concerning evidence within the dataset to suggest that educational outcomes for children in the justice system is potentially poor.

Average across the cohorts are School aged Children **16% NEET**, above School age **38% NEET**. Highest figures are **33%** of school aged children on a referral order were **not in full-time education**, and **66%** of above school aged children on a YRO were **NEET**.

- VII. **General:** The service has invested (Via OPCC funding) in '*Virtual Decisions*' interactive **Knife Crime, Influence and Identity** interventions, these programmes aim to improve our effectiveness to reduce violence, knife crime and exploitation risks. In addition the service is working in collaboration with the CSP and other partners on the Serious Violence Duty support in schools raising awareness on violence, drug and Vape use. The service will refresh our arrangements, policies and practice around the management of Out of Area children to ensure effective management of cases and maintain monitoring of demand.
- VIII. **Further analysis** on ALN and Mental Health and Wellbeing and revisit Disparity and Disproportionality data is required before April 26 to inform Youth Justice Plan (2026-27) and Operational programming.

4.24 Public Protection and Safeguarding

- 4.25 The service has a comprehensive approach to risk management and public protection, all assessments focus on the risk the child poses to themselves and others. These assessments are quality assured by Team Managers at Start, Mid-point and End of support/supervision, with quality assurance Audits completed annually. In addition, the monthly service *Risk Panel* provides an opportunity to staff and managers to assess risk levels, adjust, and reset planning and support which will include communication with other services.
- 4.26 Where there is serious risks the service has active and effective relationships with MAPPA and MARAC arrangements, these arrangements are reviewed annually to ensure clear and consistent communications and monitor practice changes. Children who are on transition from custody to community or who are moving to adult service (Probation), there are policy and practice agreements in place with the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme lead by NW Police and HMPPS.
- 4.27 The service operates through the Safeguarding Policies of Gwynedd Council and is compliant with All Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Safety and Wellbeing are key assessment components of our assessment framework. The service is aligned with and fully contributes to the safeguarding and child protection practice of both local authorities. Staff and managers are fully engaged with children's services in all aspects of safeguarding practice, all staff receive safeguarding training to the appropriate level for their role, and we are currently working with Cyngor Gwynedd in the development and implementation of the new rollout of safeguarding training.

4.28 Funding

- 4.29 The YJS is a multi-funded service which requires reporting and monitoring processes at both local and national levels. Approximately 46% of the service is

funded by grants, with the remainder provided by the Local Partnership (Local Authority, Police, Health and Probation).

4.30 Finance management and oversight is provided by Cyngor Gwynedd with a Group Accountant attached to the service. The Management Board review service finances and risks at all quarterly meetings.

4.31 The Tables below outline the current budgets for 2025-26;

4.32 Table 1 (Cash)

Source	2024-25 (£)	2025-26 (£)	% contribution
Gwynedd Council	187,530.65	210,570.00	48.08%
IOACC	142,890.00	156,180.00	35.66%
North Wales Police	27,897.00	28,900.00	6.60%
BCUHB (Health)	34,000.00	37,320.00	8.52%
Probation	5,000.00	5,000.00	1.14%
Sub Total	397,317.65	437,970.00	100.00%

4.33 Table 2 (Secondment)

Source	2024-25	2025-26 (Estimate)	% Contribution
Gwynedd Council	54,630.73	60,470.00	27%
IOACC	54,789.07	55,540.00	24.7%
North Wales Police	61,693.55	61,693.55	27.5%
BCUHB (Health)	27,500.00	27,500.0	12.2%
Probation	19,365.18	19,365.18	8.6%
Sub Total	217,978.53	224,568.68	100%

4.34 Table 3 (Grants) Requires Quarterly reporting

Source	2024-25	2025-26
Welsh Gov PPE (CCG)	252,926.47	256,120.00
OPCC North Wales	16,793.28	16,790.00
YJ Grant	277,943.00	282,000.00
Welsh Gov FF (Gwynedd)	18,000.00	18,000.00
Sub Total	565,662.75	572,910.00

4.35 Table 4 (Totals)

Source	2025-26 £
Statutory Partner Contribution (Cash)	437,970.00
Secondment (in-kind)	224,568.68
Grants (46%)	572,910.00
Total	1,235,448.68 (+4.6%)

4.36 Representation has been made at local and national levels to highlight the current burden placed on Local Authorities in regard to the inequality of financial support for Youth Justice in Wales. This is not just the contributions it also includes the costs of hosting and costs linked to Remand.

4.37 Current funding support for the service is safe and well-manged but we cannot ignore the risks when a high proportion of the funding is made on annual grant arrangements.

5. Consultation

5.1 We have not had the opportunity to consult with other services/partners in the preparation of this report.

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

6.1 Have you **included** residents / service users? If not, when and how do you plan to consult them?

6.2 All formal assessment AssetPlus and PaDAT (mandated assessment tools, YJB/MOJ) on children require reported consultation and feedback from children and their parents/carers. This feedback and contribution (*'voice of the child'*) is quality assured and reviewed by team managers during audits and supervision.

6.3 In addition, the service commissions 'Viewpoint' a YJ based survey programme that we use for independent gathering of children's views of the service provided a recent report can be accessed in **Appendix d**.

6.4 As part of our Resilience Intervention Research 60 survey questionnaires have been completed with children and parents/carers. The results from the analysis will be shared with staff and the Management Board on completion of the study. The

questionnaires explore both the quality of the new intervention created and also the child's improved understanding of resilience and dealing with adversity.

- 6.5 Within our various multi-agency Panel meetings (Education, Health, Risk and Allocation) we invite our partners to feedback and influence our work. They are provided with the opportunity to contribute to Assessments, Planning and Decision making their input enhances the quality of work and they are able to access the feedback from the children.
- 6.6 As part of our delivery of Referral Orders and Out of Court Resolutions there is a requirement for the use of Volunteers at RO Panel meetings and Decision-Making Panels. We have an active group of 8-10 volunteers at any one time and they provide vital, impartial support to the children and the service, representing the community and victims whilst recording the voice of the child which will be included in assessments and reports.
- 6.7 In Youth Court Panels, the service is given feedback from the Sentencers and Court Staff on the quality of support, assessment and reports they receive. This information is used to inform wider QA processes and maintains high quality services.
- 6.8 Have you considered **collaborating**?
- 6.9 We are collaborative service with a multi-agency staff group, in addition to meeting the needs of the child, we and our partners seek 'Outcomes of mutual benefit' when considering our approach to service support.
- 6.10 We have Service Level Agreements with partners in Health, North Wales Housing, Careers Wales and IOM.
- 6.11 The service operates within the wider children's services support, contributing to;
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Meetings
 - Child Protection Conferences
 - Look After Child reviews
 - Serious and Organised Crime Groups
 - Exploitation Panels
 - Community Safety partnership
 - Safeguarding Children Board
 - Senior Management Teams (Children's Services)
 - Families First and Children's and Community Grant Planning.
 - Criminal Justice Board
 - Area Planning Board
 - Vulnerability Board
 - Serious Violence Duty Groups

- 6.12 How have you considered the **long-term** and what will people's needs be in years to come?
- 6.13 The Youth Justice Plan for Gwynedd and Mon sets out the short to medium-term planning for the service and the Management Board, and through our work with the Youth Justice Advisory Panel, Welsh Government and the YJB we are constantly analysing data and trends to ensure effective horizon scanning, innovation and best practice development.
- 6.14 We contribute to the regional and national Criminal Justice Boards, participation in these boards and project groups ensures the service is well sighted on policy changes and demand risks across the justice system.
- 6.15 One of the main considerations currently being explored by the Welsh Government and Ministry of Justice is the Devolution of Youth Justice in Wales, there are live work programmes scoping; Funding Arrangements and the Structural Requirements should political will be agreed.
- 6.16 To ensure **integration**, have you considered the potential impact on other public bodies?
- 6.17 The service is constantly looking at how our work and findings affect partners and other services. Our multi-agency Management Board ensures that our relevant partners are fully sighted on our work and have the opportunity to identify opportunity to learn from and contribute to the service. One of the main requirements of Management Board members is to disseminate information from the service within their own agency, and to provide information to the work of the Board from the wider public service partnership.

7. Impact on Equality Characteristics, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty

- 7.1 Gwynedd and Ynys Mon have the highest percentage of Welsh Language speakers per population in Wales; Gwynedd 64.4% and Anglesey 55.8%. Therefore, the YJS workforce needs to reflect this. Currently of the 40 staff (across the 3 services), 37 (93%) are First Language Welsh speakers, 2 are Welsh learners (intermediate), and 1 with limited Welsh language ability (Basic). All interventions, communications and support are delivered in the families or child's language of need, the service works to achieve the requirements of the Cyngor Gwynedd Welsh language Policy.

8. Next Steps

8.1

1. Continue with our effective response to HMIP findings.
2. Consolidating our work to improve representation and participation at the Strategic Board.
3. Ensure the effective implementation of the new '*Regional Youth Out of Court Disposal Policy*' with a view to increasing the use of Outcome 22, reducing First-time Entrant numbers, working with colleagues in the YJB and local policing to monitor and affect change.
4. Continue with efforts to improve Strategic Oversight and Leadership.
5. Maintain good and effective service delivery in the context of financial pressures.
6. We will work closely with the service and our colleagues in the wider partnership to Prioritise;
 - *Youth Violence,*
 - *Education Training and Employment monitoring (including exclusion practice)*
 - *ensuring that our Exploitation practice and support keeps children safe.*
7. We will work with colleagues in YJB Cymru and the YJB Data team to maintain effective Performance reporting.

8.2 Our performance regarding Education Training and Employment in 2022-25, was below standards, the most concerning area was that of school aged children, we have recorded a rise in the number of; exclusions received by the children we work with, alternative timetables below the required 25 hrs and we perceive a distinct deterioration in the relationship between schools and families. This will continue to be a considerable focus for the service in the next 12 months, looking specifically at the number and types of ACEs and levels of trauma experience by those children not in full-time education.

8.3 The service has been without Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) support for 6 years. Despite numerous attempts and securing finance for a secondment, our local SLCN Team has been unable to provide resource. Work continues to explore other options for resourcing/support, additional pressure being felt following HMIP recommendations from our inspection in November 2023. Our efforts are hindered due to decisions made by Welsh Government not to prioritise Youth Justice in their '*60%-Giving them a Voice*' (2023) Report and rejecting recommendation 3 & 6. It should be noted that our local SaLT colleagues have been very supportive in the creation of training and resource plan for service staff.

8.4 Probation secondment continues to present difficulties for the service especially following findings from our 2023 Inspection where the absence of a Probation

Officer was graded as an area for improvement. Since 2022 the service has had a Probation Service Officer secondment in place of a qualified Probation Officer due to limited resources in our local probation teams, this arrangement works well for our service, as we maintain very close strategic and operation links with our local NPS/IOM senior officers and DPU lead. However there seems to be conflicting opinions from HMIP and HMPPS on how YJSs are resourced, this is a national issue, the service has limited influence in decisions being made.

- 8.5 Our disproportionality figures for BAME children are low, however there are children we work with who do not classify themselves as White British, where this occurs we seek support from others to ensure that the child's needs are fully met (see **Appendix e**). Our focus of disproportionality will be on Care experience Children, the service is at the centre of the work to roll out the new Welsh Government Protocol and Toolkit on the Decriminalisation of Care Experienced Children and Young People. We will use our position within the partnership to raise awareness and ensure that the work is included in the Serious Violence Duty needs assessment, and the new Regional Out of Court Resolution Policy.
- 8.6 Quality Assurance is a key component to effective service delivery and to ensure children receive support of the highest quality. The conduct QA audits on an annual basis as part of our planning, with the Management Board directing focus on areas work. In 2025 the service was tasked to Audit 'Assessments' and 'Work with Victims' an example of our work can be accessed in **Appendix f**.

Appendices

- a. **Staffing Structure**
- b. **G&M Youth Justice Plan 25-26**
- c. **HMIP Inspection Improvement Plan**
- d. **'Viewpoint' Report**
- e. **Disproportionality Report**
- f. **Quality Assurance Report 2025**