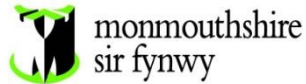


Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 7 November 2022

Notice of meeting :

People Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday, 15th November, 2022 at 10.00 am,
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK**

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
5.	Youth Offending Service To scrutinise the findings of the Youth Offending Service Inspection Report	1 - 38

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Fay Bromfield, Llangybi Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Christopher Edwards, St. Kingsmark;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor David Jones, Crucorney;, Independent Group
County Councillor Jayne McKenna, Mitchel Troy and Trellech United;, Welsh
Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell, Pen Y Fal;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Sue Riley, Bulwark and Thornwell;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Maria Stevens, Severn;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong, Caldicot Cross;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor John Crook, Magor East with Undy;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues) 2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve? 3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this? <p>- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member</p>	
Questions for the Meeting	
<p><u>Scrutinising Performance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why? 2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why? 3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why? 4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic? 5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service? 6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings? 7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives? 8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve? 	<p><u>Scrutinising Policy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least? 2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? What consultation has been undertaken? Did the consultation process comply with the Gunning Principles? Do stakeholders believe it will achieve the desired outcome? 3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective? 4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say? 5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence? 6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities? 7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards? 8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications

9. been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
- 10.
11. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
- 12.
13. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?
- Is the service working with citizens to explain the role of different partners in delivering the service, and managing expectations?
- Is there a framework and proportionate process in place for collective performance assessment, including from a citizen's perspective, and do you have accountability arrangements to support this?
- Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? If so, can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers provide members with copies and a detailed explanation of the EQIA conducted in respect of these proposals?
- Can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers assure members that these proposals comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation? Do the proposals comply with the Local Authority's Strategic Equality Plan?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?
- Have you identified and considered the long-term trends that might affect your service area, what impact these trends could have on your service/your service could have on these trends, and what is being done in response?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income?
- Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the

actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

- Were the intended outcomes of the proposal achieved or were there other results?
- Were the impacts confined to the group you initially thought would be affected i.e. older people, or were others affected e.g. people with disabilities, parents with young children?
- Is the decision still the right decision or do adjustments need to be made?

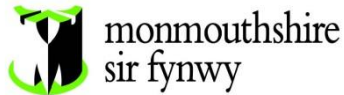
Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

This page is intentionally left blank



SUBJECT: HM Inspectorate of Probation: Inspection of the Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Services October 2022

MEETING: People Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 15th Nov 2022

1. PURPOSE:

To provide committee members with the opportunity to scrutinise i) the Inspection Report published in October 2022 and ii) the service response to the recommendations and outcomes of the inspection via the Inspection Action Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The committee scrutinise the Inspection Report and Inspection Action Plan.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Youth Offending Services (YOS) in Monmouthshire are provided through a partnership arrangement between Monmouthshire and Torfaen Councils and is established under the Crime & Disorder Act (1998). Governance arrangements are enacted through the Local Management Board chaired by the Director of Torfaen Social Services, with membership from statutory partners from both Councils, Police, Probation and Health.

3.2 The core objective of the Youth Offending Services is to prevent offending and re-offending in children by challenging their behaviour and raising awareness of the consequences of offending / anti-social behaviour, helping children take responsibility for their actions and ultimately helping them to break the cycle of re-offending and move forward in positive ways.

3.3 In June 2022 the service was inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. This inspection was conducted through a review of documents, audits of case files, focus groups with staff; interviews with members of the Local Management Board and feedback from children and their families.

3.4 Monmouthshire & Torfaen (YOS) has received an overall rating of 'Good' out of the four-point scale: 'Outstanding', 'Good', 'Requires improvement' and 'Inadequate'.

3.5 The quality of resettlement policy and provision was separately rated as 'Requires improvement'.

3.6 Chief Inspector of Probation Justin Russell said: "Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service has a strong understanding of the children they supervise and what it takes to reduce the risk of them being drawn back into committing further offences. However, improvements were required in specific elements of court work, such as the assessment of children's safety and wellbeing, and in planning to manage risk of harm to others."

3.7 Inspectors found staff at Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS to be highly skilled and motivated in their supervision of children, particularly in the implementation and delivery of casework. The YOS partnership has access to a wide volume and range of quality services, including specialist and mainstream interventions. Case managers supported YOS children to access such services swiftly, which led to positive outcomes.

3.8 However, inspectors judged that the service needs to improve its governance and leadership. The YOS Management Board should establish a consistent, cohesive membership and set of arrangements, to allow it to communicate a clear vision across the partnership and to key stakeholders. We were encouraged that the new board chair recognises these challenges.

3.9 In total seven recommendations were made, which are as follows:

The Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:

- review its membership, role and function to make sure that its representatives have the seniority to make decisions and commit necessary resources
- improve its analysis and use of data to shape strategic and operational delivery
- develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YOS.

The Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service should:

- improve the quality of assessment of children's safety and wellbeing in court disposal cases
- strengthen the quality of contingency planning in court disposal casework to manage risk of harm to others
- develop a standalone resettlement policy and formal practice guidance, with partners, to strengthen current arrangements.

The Probation Service should:

- provide a probation officer to the YOS, to support effective transitions and risk management.

3.10 The service has developed a detailed action plan in response to the recommendations made which has been endorsed by the Local Management Board.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

Not applicable to this report

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

5.1 The action plan provides the mechanism via which progress towards the recommendation made will be monitored and reported on through the LMB.

5.2 The YOS is subject to comprehensive performance management data which is reviewed by the Youth Justice Board on a quarterly basis.

6. REASONS:

To provide the Council with information and assurance regarding the quality and effectiveness of Youth Offending Services.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The total gross expenditure of the YOS is £1.6mil made up from partnership contributions from the Local Authority, Health, Probation, Police with MCC's contribution being 41.14% (£436,121.00).

There are no additional resource implications associated with this report.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

8.1 Youth Offending Services supports children to desist from offending behaviour and works to promote their welfare and wellbeing. Services provide opportunities for children to engage in pro-social and positive community orientated activities.

8.2 Prevention and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour is a cornerstone of creating cohesive communities.

8.3 The service promotes the rights of victims to be safe and protected from harm. This often includes children themselves who can be equally at risk of victimisation and offending.

8.4 The service has a good awareness of and works to address the ways in which structural inequality, exclusion and diversity issues can impact on a child's experience of the criminal justice system.

9. CONSULTEES:

Local Management Board

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

HM Inspectorate of Probation Report

Post-Inspection Action Plan

11. AUTHORS:

Chesney Chick - Service Manager for Youth Offending Services

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Chesney Chick

ChesneyChick@monmouthshire.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



HM Inspectorate
of Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in

Monmouthshire & Torfaen

HM Inspectorate of Probation, October 2022

Contents

Foreword	3
Ratings	4
Recommendations	5
Background	6
Domain one: Organisational delivery	7
1.1. Governance and leadership	7
1.2. Staff.....	9
1.3. Partnerships and services.....	10
1.4. Information and facilities.....	11
Domain two: Court disposals	15
2.1. Assessment.....	15
2.2. Planning	16
2.3. Implementation and delivery	17
2.4. Reviewing.....	18
Domain three: Out-of-court disposals	19
3.1. Assessment.....	19
3.2. Planning	20
3.3. Implementation and delivery	21
3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision.....	22
4.1. Resettlement	23
4.1. Resettlement policy and provision	23
Further information	23

Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Mike Lane, supported by a team of inspectors and colleagues from across the inspectorate. We would like to thank all those who helped plan and took part in the inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

© Crown copyright 2022

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available for download at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation.

Published by:

HM Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester
M3 3FX

Follow us on Twitter
[@hmiprobation](https://twitter.com/hmiprobation)

ISBN: 978-1-914478-88-8

Foreword

This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work.

Overall, Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS was rated as 'Good'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Requires improvement'.

Our inspection found a skilled service, with strengths clearly evident in the implementation and delivery and reviewing of court disposal casework, and in assessment, planning and delivery of casework across out-of-court disposals. The service has a strong understanding of desistance, and work to promote this was evident. However, improvements were required in specific elements of court disposal work, such as the assessment of children's safety and wellbeing, and in planning to manage and mitigate identified risks to others. Activity to address issues related to victims also needed to be more consistent.

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS's arrangements for staffing, partnerships and services are a strength. Staff are motivated, experienced and child centred. They receive regular supervision and have access to beneficial training and positive development opportunities. The YOS partnership has access to a wide volume and range of quality services, including specialist and mainstream interventions.

However, the service needs to improve its governance and leadership. Statutory and non-statutory partners are represented on the YOS Management Board, but some members' attendance is sporadic, and many are not of sufficient seniority to make decisions or commit the necessary resources. Alongside a recent change in the board chair and vice chair, this has had an impact on the board's continuity and cohesiveness. We also found a disconnect between the board and frontline YOS staff. However, we were encouraged to learn that the new board chair recognises these challenges and has prior YOS operational experience and strategic knowledge, which they will utilise to strengthen relationships and clarify expectations.

Moving forward, the challenge is for the YOS Management Board to establish a consistent, cohesive membership and set of arrangements, to allow it to communicate a clear vision across the partnership and to key stakeholders. The YOS also needs to improve its analysis, understanding and use of data on disproportionality, children's participation, resettlement, and out-of-court disposals.

There is much to commend Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS and the partnership for, which is reflected in their overall rating of 'Good'. We were encouraged by their candid self-assessment of the issues to be addressed and make several recommendations that will enable the YOS to improve further.



Justin Russell
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service
Fieldwork started June 2022

Score 22/36

Overall rating

Good



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

Requires improvement



1.2 Staff

Good



1.3 Partnerships and services

Good



1.4 Information and facilities

Requires improvement



2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Requires improvement



2.2 Planning

Requires improvement



2.3 Implementation and delivery

Outstanding



2.4 Reviewing

Outstanding



3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Good



3.2 Planning

Good



3.3 Implementation and delivery

Outstanding



3.4 Out-of-court disposal policy and provision

Requires improvement



4. Resettlement¹

4.1 Resettlement policy and provision

Requires improvement



¹ The rating for Resettlement does not influence the overall YOS rating.

Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made seven recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Monmouthshire & Torfaen. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

The Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:

1. review its membership, role and function to make sure that its representatives have the seniority to make decisions and commit necessary resources
2. improve its analysis and use of data to shape strategic and operational delivery
3. develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YOS.

The Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service should:

4. improve the quality of assessment of children's safety and wellbeing in court disposal cases
5. strengthen the quality of contingency planning in court disposal casework to manage risk of harm to others
6. develop a standalone resettlement policy and formal practice guidance, with partners, to strengthen current arrangements.

The Probation Service should:

7. provide a probation officer to the YOS, to support effective transitions and risk management.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS over a period of a week, beginning 20 June 2022. We inspected cases where the sentence or licence commenced between 21 June 2021 and 15 April 2022; out-of-court disposals that were delivered between 21 June 2021 and 15 April 2022; and resettlement cases that were sentenced or released between 21 June 2021 and 15 April 2022. We also conducted 12 interviews with case managers.

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS covers the boundaries of two local authorities: Torfaen County Borough Council and Monmouthshire County Council. The YOS is hosted by Monmouthshire County Council and sits within the Social Care and Housing Directorate. Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS is a multi-agency partnership. The service is led by the service manager, who was seconded to the YOS in January 2019 and permanently appointed in May 2020. Governance of the YOS is provided by the Local Management Board. This is chaired by the Chief Officer for Social Care and Housing (Torfaen Council), and its vice-chair is Head of Children's Services (Monmouth Council). In March 2022, the postholders in both positions changed due to retirement and promotion, respectively. Monmouth & Torfaen is one of three YOSs covering the Gwent Police area, which work collaboratively to deliver training and provide services.

Staff and senior leaders consider the YOS caseload to be complex. Children in Monmouthshire & Torfaen have experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences and trauma, and prevalent issues include child criminal exploitation, substance misuse, poor emotional wellbeing and challenges in accessing education, training and employment (ETE).

At the point of inspection, Monmouthshire & Torfaen had a 70 to 30 per cent split between out-of-court disposals and court orders. Although court disposal numbers have remained virtually identical, there has been a reduction in the number of out-of-court disposals (particularly youth cautions and youth conditional cautions) and an increase in prevention referrals. This reflects the partnership's commitment to intervening earlier with children who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system. The YOS has identified that children who commit offences of violence are the most prevalent in both the court and out-of-court cohort.

The YOS partnership has identified that black and mixed-race children are not over-represented in the overall number of children sentenced or cautioned. Girls form 28 per cent of the YOS caseload, compared with 13 per cent nationally, and many have committed offences of violence or aggression. Looked after children are over-represented.

The Youth Justice Board's key performance indicators show that Monmouthshire & Torfaen currently has a first-time entrant (FTE) rate of 121. This is broadly comparable with the Wales rate of 118, but below the England and Wales rate of 145. Although figures remain higher than national England and Wales figures, reoffending has been on a downward trajectory for the last four quarters.

Domain one: Organisational delivery

To inspect organisational delivery, we reviewed written evidence submitted in advance by the YOS and conducted 13 meetings, including with staff, volunteers, managers, board members, and partnership staff and their managers.

Key findings about organisational delivery were as follows.

1.1. Governance and leadership



The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- There is a current strategic plan, which sets out the YOS partnership's board mission statement and a set of actions.
- The new board chair is the Head of Children's Services in Torfaen and has previous senior management experience in the YOS. He understands the risks and challenges faced by the YOS and the wider partnership.
- There are terms of reference for the YOS management board, which set the expectations of board members' roles and responsibilities.
- The board chair, vice chair and some board members are connected with other strategic boards across the wider partnership.
- The YOS Head of Service has links with a range of local, regional and national strategic groups and arenas.
- Operationally, YOS managers have designated lead responsibilities and sit on relevant multi-agency operational groups.
- Provision of staffing from partners is a strength. There is a seconded police officer, a substance misuse worker, a clinical nurse specialist from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), and a speech and language therapist.
- The YOS's financial position is stable, with an annual underspend and a healthy reserve.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all board members are of sufficient seniority to commit resources and make decisions.
- Induction processes for new board members lack structure and formality, and attendance has been erratic and inconsistent in the previous 12 months.
- There is a disconnect between the board and YOS frontline operational staff, and not all board members advocate effectively for YOS children in their own agencies.
- The seconded probation officer post has been vacant for over 10 months.

- The YOS Head of Service has previously managed a looked after children and care leavers service but considers that he is still learning the specialist nature of YOS work.
- The YOS relies too much on the experienced YOS operational managers; this draws them into strategic work and functions, and away from operational activities.
- The workload, spans of control and responsibilities for operational managers require review and realignment, as they are not currently equitable.
- Performance data needs wider and richer analysis to provide the board members with a greater understanding of the risks and needs of the YOS cohort of children, particularly in relation to disproportionality.

1.2. Staff



Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

Strengths:

- Staffing levels are sufficient, with 21 out of 27 staff stating their workloads are manageable.
- Supervision is regular and deemed of good quality by staff. It consists of monthly formal supervision and daily 'open door' informal mechanisms, which staff welcome.
- Succession planning has been evident throughout the YOS – with progression evident from volunteer to paid work, and from practitioner to management roles.
- Induction processes are good, with various activities and opportunities for new staff.
- There is a varied training offer, which is accessible and supported by managers.
- Staff are motivated to deliver a quality service, with 26 out of 27 answering positively within the staff survey.
- Staff are skilled and experienced, and able to build positive relationships with children to engage them.
- Managers support staff's wellbeing (particularly in issues related to Covid-19) and staff report that they feel safe in their day-to-day work.
- Staff work together collaboratively and there are strong peer support networks across the service.
- Management oversight was effective in 100 per cent (six out of the six inspected cases) in post-court and 88 per cent (seven out of eight cases) in out-of-court-disposals.

Areas for improvement:

- Completion of appraisals is poor – the staff survey indicates that 15 out of 26 staff reported their appraisals were either overdue or not valuable. This is recognised as an issue by YOS leaders.
- Staff report that links with the YOS Management Board are weak. Responses to the staff survey indicate that over a third of staff are not aware of the board's activities.
- The YOS has no workforce development or needs analysis, and no formal written workforce development plan.
- There are minimal reward and recognition arrangements, activities or incentives in place for staff.
- There is a very limited pool of volunteers (just three at present), although the YOS was recruiting new volunteers at the time of the inspection.

1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Good

Strengths:

- There is a satisfactory strategic and operational analysis of YOS children's desistance needs.
- Children can swiftly access a range of services and support, and there are specific pathways for universal, targeted and specialist provision.
- The YOS has a full-time police officer, full-time CAMHS clinical nurse specialist, full-time ETE officer, and full-time substance misuse worker.
- Further resource is evident via a part-time speech and language therapist (SALT). Practitioners also can access a psychologist who supports with case formulation work around those more complex children within the cohort.
- Workers across all roles collaborate well, facilitate children's engagement effectively and foster positive relationships with children.
- The YOS has three additional fixed-term support workers. Two work in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to screen children and pick up any prevention referrals. A specialist worker also supports looked after children and aims to reduce their criminalisation.
- The YOS contributes to a variety of internal and external multi-agency operational groups and panels for children deemed to present a high risk of harm to others or a high level of safety and wellbeing concerns.
- Partnership managers have a broad understanding of the specialist work their staff undertake with YOS children and there is regular supervision, joint oversight and communication with relevant YOS team managers.
- The YOS has a Resettlement Panel. Any child with unmet needs (from community resolution to those leaving custody) are eligible for discussion, and a specific focus upon effective exit planning is evident.
- Feedback from the chair of the youth bench highlighted the high quality of work carried out by the YOS within the youth court.

Areas for improvement:

- The YOS partnership recognises that it needs to do more to capture the views of children and families who specifically access the YOS.
- The part-time (0.5 FTE) seconded probation officer post has been vacant for over 10 months.
- Although there is a policy that sets out expectations for how children's services and YOS should work together, staff perceive an inconsistency in support and direct work offered by children's services when the YOS is involved.
- Reparation projects have just started up again since the Covid-19 pandemic, but progress has been slow due to lack of availability of venues.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Requires improvement

Strengths:

- Referral pathways are clear. There are service level agreements and working protocols between the YOS, key partners and services.
- Processes for learning lessons are in place across the partnership. Critical learning reviews are shared at board level and disseminated to staff through team meetings, individual supervision and email.
- Throughout the pandemic, staff have used home visits and other outdoor locations creatively to deliver one-to-one work.
- YOS staff have been tenacious in ensuring that children can access the digital technology to partake in relevant virtual meetings and panels.
- The YOS office is on the border of Monmouth & Torfaen and provides a central location for staff to be based. Children are not seen at the office base, but through home visits and community venues.
- Thirteen children or parents responded to our text survey, of which 11 were very complimentary about the YOS. We also interviewed four children and two parents, who also spoke highly of the service provided by the YOS practitioners and partnership staff.

Areas for improvement:

- The necessary policies and processes are in place; however, some require review, and many are not sufficiently assessed for their impact on diverse groups.
- There is mixed evidence that performance and quality systems drive improvement.
- The YOS is supported by a full-time data analyst. However, the data is not used well enough, nor sufficiently owned or understood across all the partners, to fully identify gaps in performance or practice.
- Although there are quality assurance framework activities, there is no coordinated, formal quality assurance policy document, where processes are clear and in one place.
- There was a broad understanding of children's needs, but this had not translated into a comprehensive audit plan.
- The YOS does not have IT access within the youth court, which can affect the work of staff. These issues have been raised with senior leaders and the board for several years but have still not been resolved.
- Practitioners and managers have highlighted ongoing challenges in re-establishing community venues for delivering interventions with children since the pandemic restrictions were lifted.

Involvement of children and their parents or carers

The YOS partnership recognises that it needs to do more to capture the views of children and families who access the YOS.

There are limited processes in place to gather the views of children, such as the completion of a viewpoint survey when children finish their out-of-court disposal or court disposal with the YOS. The service also carried out a focused survey during June 2020 to ascertain how children were coping with Covid-19. Although responses were positive, in that many children perceived that the YOS was still meeting most of their needs, we found that feedback from children and parents/carers is not drawn together or analysed holistically. Consequently, it does not shape or inform the YOS's strategy or operational delivery.

The YOS contacted, on our behalf, children who had open cases at the time of the inspection, to gain their consent for a text survey. We delivered the survey independently to the 21 children who consented, with 13 responses from a mix of children and parents.

They were asked to rate the YOS on a scale of 1 to 10. Eight gave it a 10, four gave it between 7 and 9, and one scored it a 2.

Children commented:

"Before I got put on the YOT I was a troublemaker but now I have changed my life around."

"They are really understanding and there if you have any problem."

"The YOT service gave me the right support and guidance to be a better person."

The two parents who responded commented:

"Support has been so important to help myself, family and son to get in the right track. I don't know what I would have done without them."

"X was great with my son and very helpful."

Children were asked to rate the YOS on a scale of 1 to 10 on how much it had helped them stay out of trouble. Five scored it a 10, one a 9, two an 8, one a 7 and two scored a 1.

Children commented:

"The YOS gave me constant support and help with problems with peers and drugs."

"They just helped me realise what I did was wrong."

"They made me realise how dangerous it is to get involved in troubled situations and how it will only make my life worse."

We also interviewed four children and two parents, who spoke highly of the service provided by the YOS practitioners and partnership staff. One child commented:

“My YOT worker really supported me – she was doing the jobs of the police and social services and I can’t fault her. She planned lots of activities and I had a good timetable – different workers would come and pick me up for a couple of hours each day – they were keeping me busy. I can phone my old YOT worker if I need her, and she will phone me to check I am okay. Mom can phone her too. I’d like to work for the YOT, so I am getting advice on how to do that.”

Diversity

- The YOS management board has demonstrated some evidence of work to address diversity and disproportionality. However, this has not been consistent and is not explicitly highlighted as a strategic priority in the current YOS strategic plan.
- The partnership has identified that black and mixed-race children are not over-represented in the overall number of children sentenced or cautioned).
- Girls make up 28 per cent of the YOS caseload, compared with 13 per cent nationally, and many have committed offences of violence or aggression. The YOS has yet to fully identify the reasons for this. Inspectors saw impressive work being delivered with girls in some of the individual cases inspected.
- Looked after children are over-represented. They make up 12 per cent of the YOS cohort, compared with 1.2 per cent (Monmouthshire) and 2.3 per cent (Torfaen) of the general age 10-17 population. There are initiatives to address this over-representation. The YOS employs a PCLA (Protocol Children Looked After) support worker, who delivers training to residential staff, foster carers and the police regarding the decriminalisation of this cohort of children.
- Despite activity to gather and analyse some of the data on disproportionality, the YOS has not developed a specific action plan to identify the key strategic and operational tasks and actions needed.
- The YOS Head of Service stated that there have been no children who speak Welsh as their first language on the YOS caseload for over three years. However, there is a designated staff member who is Welsh speaking. In addition, arrangements are in place with a staff member in the local authority to support children who are identified as Welsh speakers.
- In terms of staffing profile, ethnic minority groups are not represented in the service. Although the YOS states that this is broadly comparable to the general population demographic (which is 97 per cent White Welsh/British), this is an area where recruitment could be improved.
- Organisational data provided by the YOS indicates that 61 per cent of staff are female. There are three volunteers; two are female and one male. The YOS is currently recruiting volunteers and is aware that increasing the diversity of this staff group would be beneficial.
- The staff survey indicates that, of those staff with a diversity need, 14 out of 17 feel their diversity needs are met very well or quite well.
- We judged that case managers in the inspected cases were effective in taking account of the children's diversity needs in their assessments, planning and the way that they delivered and implemented services.

Domain two: Court disposals

We took a detailed look at six community sentences managed by the YOS.

2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Requires improvement

Our rating² for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	83%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	50%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	83%

Assessment of desistance factors was consistently strong. Staff gained a thorough understanding of children, their diversity needs, and the wider familial and social context. They achieved this by liaising effectively with partner agencies to access information and previous assessments, and by ensuring that children, and their parents/carers, were central to the assessment process in every case. Assessment of victims' needs and wishes was more variable, which limited opportunities for restorative justice. In all the inspected cases, we saw a strengths-based approach and high levels of attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and the likelihood of engaging with the court disposal.

In a majority of cases, inspectors agreed with the case manager's assessment of safety and wellbeing. These assessments drew on information from other agencies. However, there was inconsistency and shortfalls in how the information was drawn together and analysed. Consequently, not all assessments sufficiently reflect the impact of those complex issues that increase the level of risk to the child. Some cases would have been further improved with a clearer and more evident investigative and reflective approach to the assessment of safety and wellbeing.

Assessment work should provide an analysis of how other people will be kept safe when there are signs that the child could present a risk of harm to others. We saw consistent evidence of this in court disposal cases. Case managers drew together current and historical issues or behaviours, which in turn resulted in balanced and well-reasoned assessments. Inspectors saw evidence that case managers had used information from other agencies and sources, including social care, police, education and health.

² The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Requires improvement

Our rating³ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	100%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	67%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	50%

Planning to support the child's desistance was a strength in all the inspected cases. It built on the assessment of desistance factors and, in the referral orders, agreements made at the panels. Children were fully involved in planning, as were their parents or carers, where appropriate. The inspected cases consistently highlighted strong joint planning between YOS case managers and other agencies and professionals, such as substance misuse, CAMHS and ETE workers. This enabled case managers to identify and sequence interventions. Planning to address the child's diversity was evident in all cases, and it was clear that case managers made every effort to plan for the child's individual needs, personal circumstances and social context.

Planning to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child was strong and clearly informed by other agencies, such as social care, CAMHS and the substance misuse service. This led to the necessary controls and interventions being put in place to address the issues of many children within the YOS cohort. Nevertheless, inspectors found shortfalls in the quality of some contingency plans for safety and wellbeing. This is important, as there should be a clear plan of action if the risk to a child were to either increase or decrease. Contingency plans were too vague and did not clearly set out adequate actions or responses to be taken if, or when, circumstances changed. Despite these shortfalls, the overall quality of planning to keep the child safe was sufficient in a reasonable majority of cases.

We were pleased to see that planning to manage the risk of harm to others involved other agencies. However, while there were examples of planning to address the safety of specific victims, many cases did not sufficiently plan for the necessary controls and interventions to effectively manage the risk of harm that some children pose to others. Alongside this, circumstances in a child's life can change quickly. Case managers need to consider the potential for change in each case so that, should concerns escalate, they are prepared and more likely to respond effectively. In most cases, inspectors found that contingency planning in relation to public protection lacked clarity and detail about specific actions to keep others safe.

³ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating⁴ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	100%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	100%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	100%

Implementation and delivery to support the child's desistance was sufficient in every inspected case. Inspectors found a high level of engagement from children, which reflected the proactive approach of staff and their capacity to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with them. In the services most likely to support desistance, particularly ETE, case managers consistently paid sufficient attention to sequencing and the available timescales. Service delivery reflected the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents/carers or significant others in every case, with a specific example here:

Good practice example

The case manager has worked hard to break down some of the barriers Georgia and her mum presented with, particularly around their views towards criminal justice agencies. Work included joint home visits with the social worker and ETE officer and the use of outdoor venues, such as local parks and the wharf, which helped to relax Georgia and enabled an open dialogue regarding desistance-related factors. The case manager regularly provided positive reinforcement, helping to increase Georgia's belief in her ability to change, whilst ensuring that boundaries were consistently reinforced. For example, to highlight the positive changes Georgia had made, the case manager showed her a photograph of Georgia when she was younger, looking gaunt, unkempt and under the influence of substances. Georgia did not recognise herself and now uses the photo to remind herself of how far she has progressed.

Inspectors noted that there was a high level of coordination and information exchange between the YOS case managers and partnership staff, both internally and externally. Case managers kept a balance between a strong focus on safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, and worked consistently with a range of agencies, such as education, health, social care, substance misuse and third-sector

⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

projects. For keeping other people safe, case managers had considered the protection of actual and potential victims in their delivery of all the inspected court disposal cases.

2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers. **Outstanding**

Our rating⁵ for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	83%

In all relevant cases, reviewing considered the diversity of the child and their personal circumstances and familial and social context. Formal reviews were completed at key points in the order and following a change in circumstances. Reviewing was consistently evident through written documentation, case recording or regular information-sharing between agencies in meetings and day-to-day case management discussions. This responsiveness to changing circumstances helped to maintain children's engagement and ensured that the work delivered was effective and meaningful. Reviewing continued to focus sufficiently on building on the child's strengths, enhancing protective factors and assessing motivation and engagement levels in every relevant case.

A written review of safety and wellbeing was completed in every case. Reviewing identified and responded to changes in factors relating to safety and wellbeing, and we saw examples where multi-agency meetings were arranged to ensure a coordinated partnership approach to addressing the issues to keep the child safe. Inspectors found that reviews completed by case managers led to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work in a majority of cases. Many of the children supervised by the YOS had complex lives, and their circumstances could change rapidly. There were evident links to Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation arenas, alongside the use of joint review between the child, parent/carer and CAMHS professionals in many of the inspected cases.

Reviewing was informed by the necessary input from other agencies to manage the risk of harm posed to others. Inspectors found that case managers consistently completed written reviews, which were supported through the activity of the YOS risk management panel, sharing of police intelligence and strong relationships between internal and external targeted, specialist and mainstream partnership services. As a result, we saw cases that benefited from changes to reporting, increased structure and positive activities, or allocation of additional police resource, as determined by the needs of the case.

⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

Domain three: Out-of-court disposals

We inspected eight cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of three youth conditional cautions, one youth caution and four community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in seven cases.

3.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating⁶ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	63%⁷
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	75%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	88%

In most of the inspected cases, inspectors judged that assessment sufficiently analysed how to support the child's desistance, identifying both positive and negative influences. AssetPlus assessments were completed for all out-of-court disposals, which were used to capture and analyse information from interviews with children and their parents or carers. A strength was the YOS case managers' ability to obtain information from key agencies in relation to desistance. The assessments for the out-of-court disposal panel provided a good understanding of the child, their attitudes and motivation for offending. However, case managers did not sufficiently consider opportunities for restorative justice in half of the cases we inspected, and some assessments lacked sufficient attention to any structural barriers facing the child.

We judged that assessment of a child's safety and wellbeing could be further improved by including information from other agencies more consistently, where relevant. YOS case managers are effective in facilitating engagement and fostering positive relationships with children, which did allow them to consider relevant social, emotional and physical factors, such as attachments, mental health, substance misuse and risks from others. In all cases, there was a clear written record of the child's wellbeing and how to keep them safe.

Assessments drew on relevant information and, in most cases, considered who was likely to be at risk from the child's behaviour, internal and external controls, and the nature and imminence of any risk occurring. In every inspected case, the YOS case manager had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement.

⁶ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

⁷ The ratings panel exercised professional discretion to apply a rating of 'Good' to the overall standard.

3.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating⁸ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	88%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	88%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	63% ⁹

Planning to address desistance was consistently good. The work planned was proportionate in a large majority of the cases inspected and could be achieved within the timescale of the out-of-court disposal. In all but one of the inspected cases, case managers included actions on all the key areas and services to support desistance and sequenced these appropriately. Planning for the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change was a strength, as was the planning to reinforce and develop the child's protective factors. However, of those cases where there was a direct victim, planning activity for restorative work was found to be weaker. The main desistance factors identified included: substance misuse, lifestyle, mental health, and self-identity. Case managers struck a good balance between interventions to support desistance and the need to complete specific work related to offending behaviour.

In all but one of the relevant cases, there was sufficient planning to keep children safe. When this was done well, there was strong multi-agency working, which aligned the YOS plan with other plans. Inspectors judged that most children's plans addressed identified concerns, such as substance misuse, poor mental health and emotional resilience, sufficiently. Appropriate referrals were made to key agencies such as social care, CAMHS and substance misuse services as a result.

YOS case managers involved other agencies in their planning processes in all relevant cases. Children subject to out-of-court disposals and assessed as presenting a high risk of harm to others were managed through the YOS risk management panel arrangements. However, we found that planning was variable in addressing the specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims. Alongside this, circumstances in a child's life can change quickly. We recognise the need for proportionate planning in out-of-court disposals, where interventions may be brief, but would have expected to see more detailed contingency planning in some of the cases we inspected. Contingency planning to manage public protection is important and there should be a clear plan of action if a child's risk of harm to others were to either increase or decrease.

⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

⁹ The ratings panel exercised professional discretion to apply a rating of 'Good' to the overall standard

3.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁰ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	88%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	88%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	100%

Delivery of services to support children's desistance was consistently good, building on the assessments and plans made. There was a high level of engagement and compliance with interventions, which were mainly voluntary. Case managers demonstrated persistence in gaining the support of children and their parents or carers. They matched interventions to children's needs and learning styles and took account of their diversity and other commitments. A key strength was the quality of activity within, and following, the resettlement panel. This forum has a wide remit and includes exit planning for any unmet need for all children (including those on out-of-court disposals). We saw several cases where children had been linked effectively into mainstream services or had been able to access further voluntary support from the YOS and key partner agencies, including accommodation, education, employment and training, health, substance misuse, and family services or parenting.

Implementation and delivery to support the child's safety and wellbeing was evident throughout the inspected cases. The YOS maintained a strong focus on safety and wellbeing, consistently working with a range of agencies and organisations to deliver well-coordinated packages of support. We saw good work by the case managers and other specialist workers in the YOS. Case managers advocated on behalf of children at multi-agency safeguarding hub meetings, attended Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings, and made timely referrals to specialist and mainstream services such as CAMHS, SALT and substance misuse.

The involvement of other agencies across the YOS partnership was evident and well-coordinated, particularly where there were issues concerning actual or potential risk of harm to others. We saw strong evidence of children being discussed within risk management panel arrangements and delivery of interventions to manage the safety of other people. In a large majority of cases, inspectors judged that case managers paid attention to the protection of actual and potential victims.

¹⁰ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based out-of-court disposal service in place that promotes diversion and supports sustainable desistance.

Requires improvement

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. Our key findings were as follows:

Strengths:

- There is a Gwent out-of-court disposal policy, which sets out arrangements for decision-making, provision and delivery of out-of-court disposals.
- The out-of-court disposal policy is supplemented by a prevention process and guidance notes, which sets the distinction between prevention work, community resolutions and formal out-of-court disposals.
- The out-of-court disposal framework incorporates a two-tiered approach. There is flexibility in out-of-court disposal decision-making and each case is considered individually.
- Inspectors found that the YOS is very proactive in engaging children and families before they receive an out-of-court disposal.
- All interventions and services available to children on statutory orders are available to those receiving an out-of-court disposal.
- The YOS operates a resettlement panel, which acts as a multi-agency arena to support exit planning for children who have completed an out-of-court disposal.
- Gwent has an out-of-court disposal scrutiny panel that the YOS Head of Service attends.
- Out-of-court disposal cases that are assessed as either high risk of harm, safety and wellbeing, or reoffending are referred into, and managed through, the YOS risk management panel process; therefore, they receive the same oversight and process as post-court cases.

Areas for improvement:

- The out-of-court disposal policy does not expressly detail how diversity and disproportionality are to be addressed.
- Bureau panel members should include those agencies that are focused on the safeguarding and welfare of children as well as those that are part of the criminal justice system.
- Although some YOS performance reports are generated in relation to out-of-court disposals, they do not lead to sufficient analysis of out-of-court disposal work.
- YOS senior leaders acknowledge that wider board and service activity is needed, to develop a disproportionality action plan and shape a more granular out-of-court disposal analysis and evaluation.
- The YOS does not sufficiently capture and collate the views of children who have attended the community resolution clinic or the Bureau.

4.1. Resettlement

4.1. Resettlement policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody.

Requires improvement

We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for resettlement work, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. To illustrate that work, we inspected one case managed by the YOS that had received a custodial sentence. Our key findings were as follows.

Strengths:

- There are clear and accessible referral and intervention pathways in relation to key areas such as accommodation, ETE and health.
- Information-sharing and communication between the YOS and the secure estate is strong, reciprocal and swift.
- Joint working and relationships between the YOS and key partner agencies (such as social care) are mature and collaborative, which ensures best outcomes for resettlement children.
- YOS partner staff (such as the substance misuse worker and ETE officer) work well with their counterparts in the secure estate, which leads to continuity of relationships and interventions for children.
- YOS case managers who hold resettlement cases are experienced and confident in such work.
- The YOS operates a monthly resettlement panel, chaired by a YOS operational manager. This consists of a range of professionals and allows discussion, joint planning and review of individual resettlement cases, to ensure that the children's needs are met.
- There was good management of children's safety and wellbeing, and the risk that they posed to others, through additional internal and multi-agency risk management meetings.

Areas for improvement:

- There is no written resettlement policy that formalises the resettlement procedures and processes.
- The YOS does not have a specific and detailed custody and resettlement practice guidance document for staff to use.
- Better coordination and analysis of gathered data is required to further shape and develop resettlement provision.
- Not all staff have received specific resettlement training.
- YOS staff do not know enough about the role of the national probation service victim liaison officer.
- The voices of children and their parents should be sought and used to inform the evaluation of resettlement services.

Further information

The following can be found on our website:

- [inspection data, including methodology and contextual facts about the YJS](#)
- [a glossary of terms used in this report.](#)







Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service

Post Inspection Improvement Plan: Recommendations

Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service (YOS) underwent an inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) between 20 June 2022 – 24 June 2022. This plan has been developed in response to the recommendations made in the report that is due to be published by the end of October 2022

Progress of the action points has been assessed on the following scale.

	Very Strong, Sustained Performance and Practice
	Strong features although minor aspects may require improvement
	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but important aspects require improvement
	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and urgent improvement is required

HMIP made seven key recommendations to facilitate improvement:-

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS Management Board should:

1. review its membership, role and function to make sure that its representatives have the seniority to make decisions and commit necessary resources
2. improve its analysis and use of data to shape strategic and operational delivery
3. develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YOS.

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service should:

4. Improve the quality of assessment of children's safety and wellbeing in court disposal cases
5. strengthen the quality of contingency planning in court disposal casework to manage risk of harm to others
6. develop a standalone resettlement policy and formal practice guidance, with partners, to strengthen current arrangements.

The Probation Service should:

7. provide a probation officer to the YOS, to support effective transitions and risk management

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
1. Review its membership, role and function to make sure that its representatives have the seniority to make decisions and commit necessary resources	1.1	Board membership to be examined and agencies to identify the most appropriate officer to attend, to advocate for YOS Children	YOS Management Board – Chair and Vice Chair	January 2023	Development Day held in September 2022 to raise this matter with board members	Attendance Register	
	1.2	To develop a standard induction for all new LMB members	YOS Management Team	March 2023	Discussed at Development Day – September 2022	Programme when completed	
	1.3	Attendance at LMB meetings to be monitored Develop clear escalation process for non attendance as per LMB terms of reference	Chair and Vice Chair of LMB YOS Service Manager	April 2023	Discussed at Development Day – September 2022 Ongoing Meeting	LMB Terms of Reference to be agreed at LMB Meeting 18.10.22	
	1.4	To address the disconnect between LMB and YOS frontline staff by organising a meet and greet workshop for staff and LMB members	Chair of LMB and YOS Service Manager to co-ordinate	July 2023	Discussed at YOS Managers Meeting – October 2022		
	1.5	To address the vacant probation officer post in the YOS	LMB Board Member representing Probation	August 2022	New Probation Officer now in post – August 2022	0.5 Probation Officer in post	August 2022
	1.6	Review of YOS Structure is in progress, consideration has been given to re-align the current structure	YOS Management Team	February 2023	YOS Management team have met and devised an initial draft structure. Ongoing work		

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
					will be completed in this area		
	1.7	YOS Managers Strategic and Operational functionalities to be reviewed	YOS Management Team	February 2023	YOS Management team have met. Ongoing work		
2. Improve its analysis and use of data to shape strategic and operational delivery	2.1	Redesigning performance information to be provided to LMB members and staff in an accessible format.	Information Officer	October 2022	New Performance report devised and will be presented at future LMB Meetings, Service Meetings and Supervision	Input new Performance Report template	October 2022
3. Develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YOS.	3.1	To complete a Mapping Exercise to consider how the YOS can best meet the needs of girls supervised by the service and other groups of disproportionality	YOS Management Team and YOS Staff.	February 2023	YOS Management team have met to discuss. Information Officer has analysed the data regarding females entering our service		
	3.2	Report findings from the Mapping exercise to LMB Members to identify themes and ensure a co-ordinated Response.	LMB, YOS Team, Partnership Agencies	April 2023			
	3.3	To consider appropriate staff training, specific resources to assist with interventions with girls.	YOS Management Team, YOS Staff and Partnership Agencies	July 2023			

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
4. improve the quality of assessment of children's safety and wellbeing in court disposal cases	4.1	Establishing access to children's services databases for all case managers	YOS Service Manager	March 2023	Staff have access to PLANT – Monmouthshire We are awaiting access to WCCIS - Torfaen		
	4.2	Revisiting training on AssetPlus to improve analysis of information relating to children's safety and wellbeing. Utilise resources available on the Youth Justice Resource Hub Facilitate an in-house workshop to strengthen the analysis of information in relation to complex issues that increase the level of risk to the child	YOS Management Team and staff. Specialist training providers	April 2023			
	4.3	Revising current Gate keeping/QA Tool in line with development of the YOS Quality Assurance Policy	YOS Management Team	June 2023			
5. strengthen the quality of contingency planning in court disposal work to manage the risk of harm to others	5.1	Running in-house training to strengthen the quality of contingency planning, specifically around changing circumstances	YOS Management Team	December 2022			

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
6. develop a standalone resettlement policy and formal practice guidance, with partners, to strengthen current arrangements	6.1	To facilitate a working party of relevant YOS staff to produce a resettlement policy	YOS Management Team and Senior Practitioners	March 2023	Liaise with YJB regarding good practice tools Liaise with other YOS' to share good practice		
	6.2	To arrange appropriate resettlement training for all partnership agencies	YOS Management Team and YJB	June 2023			

The Probation Service should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
7. Provide a Probation Officer to the YOS, to support effective transitions and risk management	7.1	To address the vacant probation officer post in the YOS, to support the Youth to Adult Process and assisting effective risk management	LMB Board Member representing Probation YOS Probation Officer YOS Management Team	August 2022	New Probation Officer now in post – August 2022	0.5 Probation Officer in post	August 2022

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
1. Review its membership, role and function to make sure that its representatives have the seniority to make decisions and commit necessary resources	1.1						
	1.2						
	1.3						

The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service Management Board should:							
Recommendation	Item	Action	Who	Target Date	Progress	Evidence	Completion Date
2. Improve its analysis and use of data to shape strategic and operational delivery	2.1						
	2.2						
	2.3						
3. Develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YOS.	3.1						
	3.2						
	3.3						

Broad areas for Development

- Appraisals – Check with MCC
- Develop a Workforce Development Plan
- Volunteer Training
- Viewpoint?
- Interface with Children’s Services (Policy)
- Reparation projects
- Update Policies
 - Resettlement
 - Risk Management
 - Safeguarding
 - Induction (Staff and LMB)
 - Workforce Development
 - Victim
 - Gwent Out of Court Disposal Policy
 - Gwent AA Protocol
 - QA Policy

- Prevention Policy & Process
 - Case Recording
 - Diversity & Disproportionality
- IT Access in Court
- Restorative Justice Process/QA
- Training Log