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Friday, 21 January 2022

## Notice of Reports Received following Publication of Agenda.

### Children and Young People Select Committee

Monday, 31st January, 2022 at 2.00 pm,  
County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance

Pre- meeting at 1.30pm

Attached are reports that the committee will consider as part of the original agenda but were submitted to democratic services following publication of the agenda.

Item No	Item	Pages
4.	<b>Youth Offending Service</b>  To provide a report on the aims and objectives of the service and to discuss the outcomes for children and young people and the impact of the service.	1 - 56

**Paul Matthews**  
**Chief Executive**

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**SUBJECT: YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**MEETING: Children and young People's Select Committee**

**DATE: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

## Key messages

- Torfaen & Monmouthshire Youth Offending Service (YOS) works 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 children to break the cycle of re-offending and move forward in positive ways.
- The Youth Offending Service is run jointly with Torfaen County Borough Council.
- There have been successes arising from the work of the Youth Offending Service, however, challenges still remain.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation undertook an inspection of Youth Offending Services during the pandemic. This inspection was designed to review and understand how youth offending services / teams have responded to the challenges of working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Inspection took place in May, June and July 2020 and the Inspection report was published in November 2020.

## **1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the actions set out in the YOS inspection action plan to address the recommendations set out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation to contribute to the post pandemic recovery.
- 1.2 In addition, the report will also set out the preventative interventions used by the YOS to reduce the number of young people offending/ re-offending within Torfaen AND Monmouthshire.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 In answering the key question:

*Will the actions set out in the YOS inspection action plan address the recommendations made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation to contribute to the post pandemic recovery, and will the preventative interventions used by the YOS reduce the number of young people in Torfaen offending/ re-offending?*

The Children and young People's Select Committee is invited to review the information provided and:

- Determine whether the actions set out will address the recommendations made by Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation on the Youth Offending Service provision during the pandemic;
- Assess whether the preventative interventions and work undertaken by the YOS will be effective in reducing the number of Monmouthshire & Torfaen children offending/ re-offending;
- Provide recommendations to the Executive Member for Children, Families & Communities on areas for improvement or greater focus.

### 3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The YOS is a group of multi-agency professionals who work together with one aim, that 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 help children to break the cycle of re-offending and move forward in positive ways.
- 3.2 The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service provide services for children to divert them from offending and reoffending. This is achieved by carrying out effective assessments and interventions and working in partnership with other agencies.
- 3.3 The YOS encourages children to repair the harm to victims and restore relationships with their communities. Children are encouraged, wherever possible, to meet with their victims to hear how their behaviour has affected them and agree actions that can repair the harm caused. **Appendix F** sets out the data for offences each year 2018-2021
- 3.4 The YOS values the diversity of children and helps them to achieve their potential. It works with parents and carers in supporting behaviour change within children and families.
- 3.5 COVID 19 and the subsequent lockdown presented significant and unprecedented challenges to all areas of life but most particularly to the critical services provided by social care. The children and families supported by the Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS deserve the highest quality provision and service delivery and the staff of the YOS have worked tirelessly and selflessly to ensure that these standards have been maintained. This has been achieved in collaboration with all partners. During the Pandemic, Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS experienced a reduction of approximately 20% in overall referrals. There are a number of factors that have impacted upon these figures as follows:
- Closure of youth courts
  - Changing role of the police during the pandemic.
  - Partner agencies not processing referrals
  - Lockdown measures resulting in a decrease in ASB and criminal behaviour in the community
  - Closure of schools and training provisions
- 3.6 However, referrals to the YOS prevention service continued throughout the earlier stages of the pandemic and there has been a significant increase in referrals to the Prevention Service in 2021. **(Appendix F)**

<b>Time Period:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021</b>
<b>Total Number of Young People (inclusive of voluntary interventions):</b>	208	244	198	128

- 3.7 Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service covers the boundaries of two Local Authorities, Torfaen County Borough Council and Monmouthshire County Council. The Youth Offending Service is hosted by Monmouthshire County Council and sits within the Social Care and Health Directorate. All non-seconded staff are employed by Monmouthshire County Council. This provides consistency in terms of conditions of service and general human resource management. The YOS Manager is line managed by the Head of Monmouthshire Children’s Services.
- 3.8 The YOS is governed locally by The Local Management Board (LMB), which is chaired by the Chief Officer, Social Care and Housing, Torfaen County Borough Council, with the vice chair position being assumed by the Head of Monmouthshire Children’s Services, thus ensuring appropriate representation and level of decision making/influence across both Local Authority areas. There are representatives from each of the statutory partners on the Local Management Board. The composition of the Local Management Board is set out in **Appendix A**.
- 3.9 The Local Management Board (LMB) meets on a quarterly basis and is timed in order to correspond to the availability of ratified and confirmed performance information, which forms a standing agenda item. Financial matters and planning continue to be a standing item on the Local Management Board agenda.
- 3.10 The Local Management Board continues to assume provide governance and assumes responsibility for the strategic direction of the YOS. Some of the LMB business plan includes financial reporting / planning, performance measures, progress against relevant action plans and overall capacity and capability.
- 3.11 The YOS is also governed nationally by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB). The main function of the YJB is to monitor the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services, within England and Wales. The YOS is required to submit a YJB Plan and reports annually to the YJB on matters regarding:
- Structure and Governance
  - Review of Performance
  - Resources and Value for Money
  - Partnership Arrangements
  - Risks to Future Delivery Against the Youth Justice Outcome Measures

The YOS also submits a two-year Action Plan, which is monitored and reviewed.

In the most recent report, the YOS was also required to address:

- *Responding to the Pandemic and recovery from Covid-19.*

#### **4. Information and Discussion**

##### **4.1 The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the YOS and the Children and Families it Supports and how the Service Responded to the Crisis**

4.1.1 On the 23rd of March 2020, the United Kingdom became the subject of a national 'lockdown' as a result of the global Covid-19 pandemic. This had significant implications for the YOS and service provision and delivery. Overnight, all personnel were required to 'work from home' and prevented from accessing LA premises, community venues. 'Face-to-face' contact was limited to the most high-risk cases and normal working practices were suspended indefinitely. As a service that supports some of the most vulnerable children and families, the collective response of the YOS, its partners and regional colleagues to this unprecedented crisis was critical.

4.1.2 There was an immediate, effective transition to remote working; staff communicated by email, telephone and Microsoft Teams. Where partners were not using MS Teams, the service flexibly responded to the alternative platforms, whenever possible. In contact with children and their families, staff were resourceful and creative and used a variety of platforms to continue to communicate with children and their families.

4.1.3 In these unprecedented circumstances, exceptional measures had to be taken; for example, the normal working practices of the Youth Court, were suspended for 8 weeks, except for remands and custody cases held overnight. Youth Court processes resumed fully in June 2020.

4.1.4 The YOS Service Manager worked with the Regional Gwent YOS Managers to actively mitigate the restrictions caused by the pandemic and ensure a continuity of response, across the Gwent YOS Region.

4.1.5 In order to support the protection of service provision and delivery, the YJB directed YOS's to create a 'Continuity and Delivery Plan', as an initial response to the crisis. The Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS created this plan in March 2020 (**Appendix B**). This plan outlines, in detail, the response of the YOS to the pandemic and how all service provision and delivery could be maintained, while striving to ensure the safety of staff, children and their families. This plan was revised and updated, in June 2020, in order to reflect agreed modifications in procedures, with partners, as a result of the on-going crisis.

4.1.6 In order to ensure that the response was 'child-centred', as much as possible in light of the restrictions, the views of children and their families were gathered via a bespoke survey that focused on the YOS service provision and delivery in the pandemic. The results of this survey were overwhelmingly positive and the children and their families communicated they were satisfied with the YOS's change in contact in response to the Covid restrictions. The inspectors highlighted this Survey with children and families as an area of good practice.

4.1.7

Staff continued to engage creatively with children, utilising on-line resources and effectively modifying approaches, e.g. reparation tasks continued using technology and access to audio-visual resources.

4.1.8

In August 2020, as a result of the easing of some restrictions, there was a partial reopening of the YOS office space. In order that the office space could be used and accessed safely, a guidance document and comprehensive risk assessment were created outlining all measures that must be adhered to by staff. These were accompanied by an online, electronic booking system, which recorded staff attendance at the office space, ensuring safe numbers of attendance and supporting any 'test and trace' processes. This is the current status quo, for use of the YOS offices and will remain in place until such time that all restrictions are significantly eased or completely lifted

4.2. The Recommendations Made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation (HMIP) on the Thematic Review of the Work of Youth Offending Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Action Plan Points to Address the Recommendations from this Review

4.2.1

In May 2020, at the height of the pandemic, the Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS received notification that it was to be one of 7 YOS's, in England and Wales (the only YOS selected in Wales) to participate in a HMIP thematic inspection which focused on YOS's responses to the pandemic and the measures they had taken, in order to protect the continuity of service provision and delivery during the crisis.

4.2.2

In the subsequent report, it is stated:

***'This inspection was designed to review and understand how youth offending teams (YOTs) have responded to the challenges of working during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all come to terms with what has happened and how life has changed, children and staff who are involved with YOTs are also trying to make sense of this unprecedented period. It will take time until the full effects are known. This review aims to report what we know so far.'***

*'A thematic review of the work of youth offending services during the COVID-19 pandemic' A review by HM Inspectorate of Probation, November 2020*

4.2.3

The full 'Thematic Review of the Work of Youth Offending Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic' report can be viewed at <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>.

4.2.4

The Action Plan, in response to the recommendations / learning points from this review, are incorporated in the YJB Action Plan 2021-23. These are outlined

4.2.5

below:

**Recommendations/ Learning Points / Action Plan Points\***

\*one of these action points refer directly to the YOS's responsibilities (point 9); all others demonstrate how the YOS has worked proactively to support the actions which are identified as needing to be undertaken by other stakeholders.

4.2.6

- 1. develop effective communication systems between custodial settings, courts and YOT partner agencies so that children are not***

***disadvantaged, have timely court hearings and resettlement needs can be met.***

4.2.7

The Gwent YOS Managers created a protocol (**Appendix C**), prior to the full national 'lockdown' and the Thematic Inspection, which pre-empted a possible disruption in these communication systems. This protocol ensured that the needs of the child continued to be met whilst at the custody unit and that communication was maintained with courts and YOS partner agencies during this challenging period. This protocol was reviewed and updated as and when needed; e.g. the easing of restrictions, information and direction received from external sources, such as the YJB. The YOS had no control over the closure of the youth courts. Although a backlog of cases was expected, as a result of this, Youth Offending Services in Wales did not find this was the case. The YOS Manager attended virtual meetings with relevant stakeholders initially on a fortnightly basis. This was an opportunity for all services to obtain information from custodial settings, regarding general issues and establish a network with a named contact in order to resolve child-specific queries.

***The Youth Justice Board should:***

- 2. support the development of a specific approach to managing child and adolescent to parent violence that protects the victim during periods of lockdown***

The HMPI Thematic Inspection Report highlighted the national increase in recorded incidents of domestic abuse, specifically in relation to child on primary care giver. It is suggested that this could be attributed to the restrictions created, as a result of the pandemic. The HMIP thematic inspection (May / July 2020) findings identified the opportunity to develop provision and service delivery, as a result of issues created from the Covid-19 pandemic. These were:

- The emotional health and well-being of children, following extended 'lockdown' periods
- Increased incidents of domestic violence (perpetrated by children against their parents / carers) during lockdown periods.

At the core of the new National Standards is the requirement that the provision and service delivery of YOS is to be both 'child-centred' and 'innovative'. In light of this YOS Parenting Workers were proactive in identifying the most vulnerable families and offering additional support which included applying for free school meals and any additional benefits entitled to, as well as accessing additional emotional/wellbeing support. This was extended to contacting families that had previously been closed to the service.

4.2.8

In order to assist in addressing the national increase in recorded incidents of child against parent domestic abuse, the YOS Manager worked with relevant stakeholders to secure the creation of 2 new posts. The Community Support Worker posts were created to engage with children and families to prevent children entering the Criminal Justice System. The posts sit within the prevention team of the YOS and provide a direct link to the Multi-Agency Safe-guarding Hubs (MASH) within both Monmouthshire and Torfaen. One worker is assigned to each authority

area. There is an emphasis on those cases that come to the attention of Social Services that are on the periphery of criminal activity. This links with the preventative agenda, within the police safeguarding hubs. The aim of this role is to work with children, families and partner agencies, in order to establish programmes to support children and their families to prevent offending behaviour. There is also a particular focus on working with families where the child may be exhibiting aggressive behaviour within the family home, particularly towards their primary carer.

**3. support YOTs to assess and respond to the digital divide for children and families, so that children have safe and reliable access to IT to continue with education and keep in contact with the professionals they are involved with**

The YOS created a bespoke survey (**Appendix D**), which was undertaken at the beginning of the first national 'lockdown'. This provided an opportunity for children and their families to engage with the YOS regarding the challenges they were facing, as a result of restrictions and to feedback on the quality of service provision and delivery they were receiving from the YOS.

4.2.9

This presented the YOS with an opportunity to react to a number of areas, including access to digital hardware. Steps were taken to ensure the children supported by YOS were not disadvantaged due to digital poverty. The YOT ETE (Education Training and Employment) worker, case managers and parenting workers were proactive in attempting to address this issue. They made contact with partner agencies and voluntary organisations and education providers to access equipment to enable children to access social platforms and carry out educational/training activities.

**4. review caretaking and transfer processes between YOTs in the light of remote and virtual service delivery, putting the child's best interests at the centre of decision-making.**

4.2.10

The decision was taken to maintain case responsibility and virtual contact with all care-taking cases during the pandemic. This included face to face contacts if the young person was deemed to be high risk. The YOS liaised with Children's Services and YOSs regarding the children residing within their areas but, for continuity purposes, Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS held the cases and provided the direct interventions to children and young people.

**Police and Crime Commissioners should:**

**5. work with partners to understand the levels of child on parent violence in their areas and ensure that help is available to support and protect parents who are victims.**

The YOS liaised closely with Children's Services to establish if there was an increase in referrals relating to domestic violence – child on parent/primary carer. The data in both Monmouthshire and Torfaen did not support this, however this continues to be monitored closely. It was recognised that such cases may not get reported and there was very little in the way of support systems to monitor this, e.g.

4.2.11

no educational/training placements were open who often report such cases. This issue continues to be monitored closely. As mentioned above, the introduction of 2 Community Support Worker posts, with close links to the MASH services has enabled to stream-line the referral process with Children's Services. The development of these (pilot) posts were presented to and sanctioned by, the Local Management Board of Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS. The OPCC have a seat on the board and supported the proposal. Should the roles prove successful, during the pilot period, funding from the OPCC, will be sought to make the post permanent. As a result of these posts, the YOS Prevention Panel has seen an increase in the number of referrals during the last 6 months. **(Appendix F)**

***YOT management boards should:***

***6. identify the backlog of cases that are being processed through courts, and ensure that there is sufficient workforce capacity to deal with increased caseloads.***

4.2.12

During the initial period of the pandemic, regular meetings took place with the YJB, the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to ensure there was a constant flow of information regarding court closures, the possible timeframe for them to reopen and the impact for children and their families. This exchange of information ensured the YOS was able to develop packages of support that were tailored to the individual needs of the child awaiting court dates and victims of crime. It also enabled case managers to prepare children and young people regarding the changing court environment under COVID lockdown- e.g. specific time slots, one-way systems and other safety measures. It was envisaged that the postponement of cases would have a detrimental effect upon cases new to the system, such as long waiting lists. However, this never came to fruition.

***7. work with partners to include children who are defined as high vulnerability by YOTs within the local definition of vulnerable children, for the purpose of priority access to education or other services.***

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS maintained contact with all open cases and the decision was taken to hold cases open beyond the agreed end date if a need existed.

4.2.13

As a result of the national 'lockdown', the YOS developed a process to identify those children who were the most vulnerable and at risk. This included those that present with a high level of risk with regards to reoffending and risk of serious harm to others and safety and wellbeing. These children were prioritised and plans were established to ensure sufficient contact / support from the service in order to mitigate the challenges created by the COVID-19 restrictions and safeguard the most vulnerable children. Contact was also made with recently closed cases, if there were concerns regarding social isolation factors. Contact was maintained, using a range of virtual platforms. If there were safeguarding concerns, face to face socially distanced visits were undertaken ensuring appropriate health and safety procedures were followed. The YOS liaised closely with all relevant partners (e.g. housing, education, training providers, Safeguarding within Children Services, Police, Probation Services and other voluntary and charitable services) in order to maintain access to these service provisions.

***8. consider how this group of children are to be reintroduced to school,***

***education and employment and how any attainment gap is to be addressed.***

All children supported by the YOS were monitored by the YOS ETE Officer in order to work to maximise their engagement in any ETE opportunities available. The YOS ETE Officer worked creatively to mitigate issues caused by the restrictions, ensuring that the most vulnerable children maintained contact and were accessing the most suitable, available ETE provisions. The YOS ETE Officer reports to the LMB, as a standing agenda item. This ensures that relevant partners, represented on the LMB are constantly aware of key priorities in this area and can respond appropriately in collaboration with the YOS.

4.2.14

The ETE Officer has full access to the Education Databases for both Monmouthshire and Torfaen and uses this information to:

- Ensure that children have full access to their educational entitlement
- To address any shortfalls in this entitlement, directly with service providers
- To make children fully aware of their ETE opportunities and work with them to match their needs, interests and aptitudes
- To provide constructive challenge to LEAs and post 16 service providers to ensure children and young people open to the YOS are maximising their educational opportunities to promote their future life chances.

As a result of this information sharing a sub-group has been created which specifically considers individual cases and establishes action to resolve shortfalls. The LMB Education representatives are able to address any identified issues within their respective directorates.

***YOTs should:***

***9. routinely assess children's access to IT and remote communication methods as a standard part of assessments.***

Following the publication of HMIP, Thematic Review and its recommendations, Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS implemented workshops with all staff members to ensure that they were aware of the recommendations of the review and procedures that were being put in place to address them. The level of access children have to IT and remote communication methods is now captured as part of the routine, standard AssestPlus process. From this information, the YOS is able to address any gaps in access and provision.

4.2.17

The response of the YOS staff, to the additional challenge of a HMIP Inspection during this unprecedented crisis situation, was exceptional. Even though staff were required to work from home, they engaged fully in the process of the inspection and provided all requested information to the inspection team. They met with members of the inspection team via Microsoft Teams and responded to all requests made to them. This was acknowledged, by the inspection team. In particular the inspectors fed back that the placement of YOS aligned within Children's Services resulted in information being shared efficiently and plans were aligned. There was good feedback from partners on the YOS Continuity Plan. Good practice in Wales during this period was also highlighted that YOS children were included when prioritising vulnerable children during the pandemic. Positive feedback was also provided on

the level of support provided to the staff team by the Management Team during this time.

#### 4.3 The Preventative Work Being Undertaken to Reduce the Number of Children Presenting to the YOS

4.3.1 Much of the YOS resources are directed at prevention with the reduction of smaller cohorts within the statutory setting. The YOS prevention team is well established and has continued to adapt to meet the changing climate; this includes improving data provided to the Local Management Board, particularly in relation to YOS prevention services, which enables them to scrutinise the service and provide appropriate strategic direction. Preventative support has been discussed further within this report, which includes the implementation of the 2 new posts within the service. Further changes have been made to the process to ensure that referrals from the MASH via the support workers are placed on the next available prevention agenda. A management team overview has also been included to streamline referrals for the panel.

#### 4.4 The Key Service Partnerships and External Organisations That Operate in Collaboration with the YOS and the Role They Play in Preventative Work

4.4.1 Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Her Majesty's Court Services cover the historical Gwent area and three Youth Offending Service areas cover the area of 'Gwent'. The three YOS Managers meet regularly in order to examine and plan options for collaborative working. There exists a range of local projects, sub regional and regional projects across the three Gwent YOS areas. These are in relation to the project for Looked After Children (PCLA), Road to Learning, Cars and Consequences and the Gwent Monitoring and Review Panel.

4.4.2 YOS Grant funding from the Police Crime Commissioner is provided with a focus on substance misuse and victim work.

4.4.3 There are several other initiatives and practices that promote partnership and collaborative arrangements within the Monmouthshire and Torfaen areas, within the broader Gwent footprint and across Wales both at strategic and operational levels.

- The YOS manager is a member of YOT Managers Cymru, which meets in order to share good practice, discuss policy implications and devise joint responses considering wider strategic and political issues that impact upon the functioning of Youth Justice. The YMC terms of reference were recently reviewed in 2021.
- The YOS Local Management Board consists of a broad range of agencies/partners and is appropriately represented. Due to the line management and hosting arrangements of Monmouthshire CC it is deemed appropriate for the chair to originate from Torfaen CBC and vice chair from within Monmouthshire CC.
- The YOS manager continues to be line managed by the Head of Children Services within Monmouthshire. In addition to the line management that takes place, the YOS manager also meets on a regular basis with the Chief Officer, Social Care and Housing within Torfaen.

- There is a Gwent wide regional Safeguarding Children's Board which one Gwent YOS Manager attends on behalf of the three Gwent YOS areas. Sub-groups and regional groups are attended by Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS management team.
- An Operational Manager/Service Manager attends relevant Children Services management team meetings for both Local Authorities.
- A Senior Practitioner attends the Early Intervention Panel (SPACE) in both the Monmouthshire & Torfaen areas.
- The YOS Manager attends the Safer Monmouthshire Group and inputs into the Monmouthshire strategic needs analysis and Single Plan via this forum.
- The three Youth Offending Services in Gwent are represented at Safer Gwent by the YOS Manager for Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly YOS.
- The YOS Manager attends the Gwent wide Criminal Justice Strategy Board.
- The YOS Managers across Gwent meet regularly with senior representatives of Gwent Police.
- There is a Gwent wide process document for the administration of Out of Court disposals via the developed Gwent wide Bureau and Out of Court Disposals framework incorporating the Bureau Process for Children across Gwent. This process is subject to regular monitoring and review.
- A Gwent wide scrutiny panel for Out of Court Disposals (youth and adult) continues to monitor the use of Out of Court Disposals and report to the Criminal Justice Strategy Board.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager will represent the three Gwent YOS' at the Gwent Regional Collaborative Committee.
- The YOS manager is a member of the Gwent MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) Strategic Management Board and represents the three Gwent YOS areas.
- The YOS Manager is a member of the Regional Integrated Offender Management Board and represents the three Gwent YOS areas.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager attends the Regional Integrated Offender Management Steering Group.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager attends the monthly Integrated Offender Management Migration meetings.
- The YOS Police Officer attends regular Neighbourhood Policing meetings to share and gather intelligence.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager attends monthly Serious and Organised Crime meetings.

- The YOS has an identified Prevent lead (Operational Team Manager). YOS staff received training/awareness and refresher sessions are planned for later this year.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager attends the Supporting People Group.
- The YOS Manager is represented on the Positive Pathways Group in Torfaen and an Operational Manager sits on the Management Board for the local Pupil Referral Units and the Keeping in Touch group.
- A YOS Operational Team Manager attends the ASD Stakeholder Group.

#### 4.4.4

- The YOS Information Officer attends the South Wales Information Officer Group (SWIOG).
- The Newport YOS Manager represents the Gwent YOS' at the Gwent Area Planning Board

In line with Welsh Government guidance, the three Gwent YOS' have established a monthly monitoring and review panel to review all cases where children and young people are held overnight in Police Custody (post charge).

- The three Gwent YOS areas commission joint training where required.
- Service Level Agreements / joint working protocols / MOUs exist between the YOS and:
  - Children's Services (Monmouthshire and Torfaen)
  - Local Education Authorities (Monmouthshire and Torfaen)
  - Careers Wales – reviewed in 2020 and reviewed in June 2021
  - Barod (formerly Drug Aid Cymru) – Joint SLA (Monmouthshire/Torfaen and Newport YOS areas) – agreed 2020 (to be reviewed)
  - HMCTS (HM Courts & Tribunals Service) (Gwent wide) – reviewed in 2020 (2 yearly)
  - CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) (Gwent wide) – currently being reviewed
  - ABUHB for the provision of a Speech and Language Therapist (Gwent wide) – reviewed 2021.

- The YOS host a multi-agency Prevention Panel where all referrals are discussed, and intervention plans agreed

#### 4.5

- The YOS host a multi-agency Resettlement and Reintegration Panel

#### 4.5.1

- The YOS host monthly Risk Panel Meetings for all high risk (re-offending and serious harm) cases

### **Plans That Are in Place to Recover From the Impact of the Pandemic**

- 4.5.2 In August 2020, the Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS completed the 'Transition to Recovery Plan' (**Appendix E**), as directed by the YJB. This continues to be reviewed and updated in line with the changing landscape as a result of the pandemic. The period of transition to recovery presents an opportunity to reflect

on the responses to the crisis and plan to ensure the continuance and development of effective and innovative practices used, in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children supported by Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS.

4.5.3 The Covid-19 pandemic crisis has undoubtedly created many challenges but has also presented further opportunity for creativity and innovation. Examples of good practice during this period has been the development of virtual reparation processes which has enabled children to continue to meet the requirement of their interventions. This has proved successful for many children and the YOS will consider ways to utilise these moving forward. Further examples have been the development of virtual provision in order to deliver Construction Skill Certification Scheme card training which has resulted in some children retaining this qualification during the pandemic, which would otherwise not have been possible. Parenting workers made contact with parents to enable them to apply for the free school meals for children who were no longer able to receive these due to school closures. The YOS Education Training and Employment (ETE) Officer has liaised with ETE providers to ensure that children were able to access IT facilities in order to undertake home-learning. Case-managers have been very creative in engaging children during time using a wide range of methods and approaches.

However, it has been the unfailing resilience, professionalism and dedication of the YOS staff from all areas of the service, which must be acknowledged most of all. In particular the inspectors acknowledged the additional pressure to the operational management team and the inspectors indicated they had found this a common theme across England and Wales.

## **5. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

I have not undertaken an Integrated Impact Assessment as this is not a decision report, it's a performance review.

## **6. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

I have not undertaken an options appraisal as there is no decision.

## **7. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

7.1 Within the body of the report, I have outlined the step taken, by Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS, to meet the recommendations Made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation (HMIP). See paragraph 4.2.5.

7.2 In August 2020, the Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS completed the 'Transition to Recovery Plan' (**Appendix E**), as directed by the YJB. This continues to be reviewed and updated in line with the changing landscape as a result of the pandemic. The period of transition to recovery presents an opportunity to reflect on the responses to the crisis and plan to ensure the continuance and development of effective and innovative practices used, in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children supported by Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS.

7.3 The Covid-19 pandemic crisis has undoubtedly created many challenges but has also presented further opportunity for creativity and innovation. The YOS will continue to build on the successful development of virtual reparation processes and

other virtual support packages as outlined earlier within the report The YOS would welcome scrutiny's thoughts on these and other potential future developments.

**.8. REASONS:**

N/A.

**9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

**9.1 The Key Challenges Facing the YOS in the Short and Longer Term and The Financial Challenges Facing the YOS**

9.2 There are numerous risks and potential challenges ahead in terms of service delivery:

- The continued uncertainty regarding ongoing funding for the Youth Offending Service is a constant risk as it relates to continuation of service delivery. Year on year notification of funding makes medium to longer term financial planning difficult with uncertainty of external grants having a significant impact upon this. Coupled with this, the often late notification of external grant funding means that there is inevitable disruption via uncertainty at the end (and sometimes beginning) of the subsequent financial year.

**B5: YOT budget**  
Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board			224,082	224,082
Local Authority			888,875	888,875
Police	57,842		84,055	141,897
Police and Crime Commissioner			51,780	51,780
Probation	28,653		5,000	33,653
Health	42,794		39,402	82,196
Welsh Government			242,422	242,422
Other				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,289</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,535,616</b>	<b>1,664,905</b>

\* The Local Authority split is:

Torfaen	£452,754
Monmouthshire	£436,121
<b>Total</b>	<b>£888,875</b>

- The continuation of financial pressures placed on statutory partners has, thus far, had a minimal impact upon Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS. As continued pressures are placed on partners, particularly Local Authorities there are anticipated financial implications for the YOS core funding. This has been improved due to the three year financial agreement. As our grant funding remains uncertain, it is continually important that our statutory partners maintain their commitment to the service.

- The complexity of YOS funding, with grants that include a range of differing and similar terms and conditions has and continues to present its own challenges. Whilst some funding is linked solely to specific projects, they generally impact upon overall service provision within the YOS area. This presents a continued challenge as it relates to overall financial management.
- Developing and embedding practice in light of the new National Standards.
- There remains an unknown impact of lockdown restriction on children and their parents/carers and how provision will meet this potential demand.
- Staff changes - long serving members of the service are retiring which may destabilize some aspects of service delivery.
- Criteria to funding streams within Torfaen has been altered, which may impact on future service delivery. There was a reduction of 5% Children & Communities Grant funding, from TCBC in 2020/21; this is being managed from underspends. However, should there be a further decrease in CCG contributions from TCBC or MCC, this will have an impact on provision and service delivery.

## 10. **CONSULTEES:**

- 10.1 In order to ensure that the response was 'child-centred', as much as possible in light of the restrictions, the views of children and their families were gathered via a bespoke survey that focused on the YOS service provision and delivery in the pandemic. The results of this survey were overwhelmingly positive and the children and their families communicated they were satisfied with the YOS's change in contact in response to the Covid restrictions. The inspectors highlighted this Survey with children, young people and families as an area of good practice.
- 10.2 The Service Manager consults and works collaboratively with the Gwent YOS Managers, Gwent Police partner agencies and children/ families, in order to ensure the provision of an effective YOS.
- 10.3 The YOS consults on a regular basis with partner agencies within the functions of the Local Management Board.

## 11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

<b>Appendices</b>	<p>Please insert a list of appendices here. Please note, appendices should always be lettered or numbered consecutively - and ideally be headed up with the committee name, date and report title</p> <p><b>Appendix A</b> – LMB Members  <b>Appendix B</b> – Continuity &amp; Delivery Plan  <b>Appendix C</b> – Gwent YOS &amp; Custody  <b>Appendix D</b> – Survey results Lockdown  <b>Appendix E</b> – Transition to Recovery Plan  <b>Appendix F</b> – Data on Number of Young People under the YOS (inclusive of voluntary interventions)</p>
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**12. AUTHOR: Chesney Chick, Service Manager, Monmouthshire & Torfaen Youth Offending Service**

**13. CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Tel: 01495 768300**

**E-mail: [chesneychick@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:chesneychick@monmouthshire.gov.uk)**



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## Appendix A)

Name	Agency representing	Post in agency	Ethnicity	Gender
Keith Rutherford (Chair)	Torfaen County Borough Council	Chief Officer	White	Male
Jane Rodgers (Vice Chair)	Monmouthshire County Council	Head of Children Services	White	Female
Amanda Lewis	National Probation Service	Gwent & PDU Head	White	female
Adam Edwards	Aneurin Bevan Health Board	Mental Health Advisor	White	Male
Mike Richards	Gwent Police	Superintendent	White	Male
Sarah Greening	Gwent Police	Chief Inspector	White	Female
Sharran Lloyd	Monmouthshire County Council	PSB Manager	White	Female
Chesney Chick	Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS	Service Manager	White	Male
Rob Long	Monmouthshire County Council	Accountant	White	Male
Fiona Cross	Torfaen County Borough Council	Elected Member	White	Female
Penny Jones	Monmouthshire County Council	Elected Member	White	Female
Josh Klein	Monmouthshire County Council	Head of Youth Service	White	Male
Karen Kerslake	Torfaen County Borough Council	Information and Communications Manager, Public Service Support Unit.	White	Female
David Williams	Torfaen County Borough Council	Head of Youth Service	White	Male
Tracy Tucker	Torfaen County Borough Council	Head of Pupil Support and Partnerships	White	Female
Richard Austin	Monmouthshire CC	Principal Inclusion Officer	White	Male
Patty Wysom	Careers Wales	Area Manager	White	Female
Eleri Thomas	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	White	Female
Donna Lewis	Torfaen County Borough Council	Inclusion, Senior ALN Manager	White	Female

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**MONMOUTHSHIRE & TORFAEN  
YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE  
(YOS) Continuity Plan in response to  
the COVID-19 Pandemic – March 2020  
\*Revised version June 2020**

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS, Mamhilad Park Estate, Mamhilad,  
Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 0YT

## **Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS: COVID-19 Continuity/Delivery Plan**

This continuity and delivery plan has been developed to ensure there is a shared response from Gwent Youth Offending Services / Teams in relation to all areas of work, thus ensuring service provision consistency and to identify Monmouthshire & Torfaen's YOS specific requirements.

The Gwent YOS Service Managers met to agree areas of work to ensure consistency of service delivery across Gwent, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst this plan has been agreed at Service Manager Level, it is subject to amendment in response to changes in the COVID-19 pandemic and or Government advice and guidance.

### **Courts**

The normal working practices of the Youth Court were suspended for 8 weeks, when the 'lockdown' period was initiated, except for remands and custody cases held overnight. From the 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, HMCTS announced that Courts will begin to resume hearings, with a number of social distancing and safety measures in place. The Court will operate to facilitate social distancing, in all areas. Appropriate interval slots have been factored into the listing and defendants have been advised of any revised times for surrendering to their bail. Black/yellow hazard tape will be used, around the building, as a physical barrier/visual reminder to people to obey distancing advice. Posters and information bulletins repeat this advice at all HMCTS premises. The courtrooms the courts will operate to allow everyone to maintain their distance from one and other.

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS has a Statutory Team rota and the allocated member of staff will contact Police custody and the Court to determine whether any young people have been detained overnight.

In the event that a young person is placed before the Court a number of procedures will be followed, in order to maximise the safety of all those involved. First, the YOS will liaise with the Court clerk to discuss whether representation can be made via telephone, video conferencing or email or other technologies. The YOS Officer will ascertain, from detention staff, whether the child is:

- Experiencing a high temperature (fever)
- Experiencing a new continuous cough
- And/or they have been self-isolating due to residing with a person displaying the above symptoms.

If detention staff respond positively to any of the above, then the YOS Officer will liaise with the line manager and the interview and presentation of findings will happen remotely. The YOS Officer will not attend the Court.

If detention staff confirm that the young person is not displaying either symptom and

has not been self-isolating, then the YOS Officer will be required to attend Court. In this case, YOS staff will follow the protocol agreed by Gwent YOS Service Managers for attendance at the Gwent Police Custody Suite, as outlined in the Appropriate Adult section of this plan (p.4).

Verbal stand down reports will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in agreement with the Court. A brief assessment will be completed at Court, during an agreed adjourned period and a verbal report then given. Consideration needs to be given to last YOS assessment date, up to 3 months ago and seriousness of sentencing, within the 3-month YJB guideline, (verbal stand down reports may not be considered suitable for potential custody cases). Under Covid 19 restrictions there may not be an appropriate area within the court to complete an assessment and therefore it will not be possible to complete a stand-down report in all circumstances.

If Youth Courts or Magistrates Courts revert back to virtual hearings, the YOS will engage via any communication method implemented.

If assessments can be started at Court safely, they will be whilst the young person is present. This will depend on the identification of a suitable space to allow social distancing.

YOS Operational Managers will consider if additional staff members are required to attend Court dependent upon risk and need. In this event, they would travel separately to maintain social distancing.

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS will continue to provide weekend 'on call' cover, as outlined by the duty rota. The Manager back-up provision will continue, throughout.

### **Bail and Remand Hearings**

#### **i) Bail**

The Court Officer will consider the restrictions imposed by the COVID -19 outbreak, when proposing a feasible bail package. For instance, Bail Support will involve telephone calls and face-to-face contact. The use of external controls such as an Electronically Monitored Curfew will be carefully assessed, in view of the heightened risks of domestic abuse within family homes.

Officers will be aware that, as of the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, Location Monitoring (LM) GPS tags are available to the Court as part of sentencing or bail packages. Further information regarding LM can be found at:

[Y:\Shared\EDYouthJustice\3 - Statutory YJ Team\COURT INFORMATION\GPS Tagging](#)

#### **ii) Remand to the Care of the Local Authority**

If the child's behaviour is so serious that Remand to the Care of the LA is a consideration, then the Court Officer should immediately notify the line manager and

Children's Services.

It is essential that a copy of the Remand Notice is obtained by the Court Officer, before they depart from the Court. If the young person is an out of county child, then the remand paperwork must be made out to their home Local Authority.

As the young person is now remanded to the Care of the Local Authority, the Court Officer will need to liaise with the line manager regarding transport. The decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Issues regarding social distancing will need to be planned for and addressed in these instances.

### **iii) Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA)**

Should the Officer identify that the young person is likely to be remanded or sentenced to YDA, they should notify the line manager immediately. The line manager can subsequently support with AssetPlus stages and liaising with the Youth Custody Service.

Given the current situation, it is important to ensure the AssetPlus process is adhered to, to ensure appropriate safeguarding of children and young people. It is particularly important that the latest AssetPlus Custody Stage is sent to Youth Custody Service Placements Team at the earliest opportunity. This should be completed via Connectivity, where possible. In the event that Connectivity is not possible, the AssetPlus should be sent to the following regional secure email address:

[YCSPT-Wales@justice.gov.uk](mailto:YCSPT-Wales@justice.gov.uk)

The Court Officer will discuss any concerns regarding the sharing of custody related information with the Senior Placement Officer.

### **Secure Estate / Parc YOI**

All secure estates have implemented procedures in response to COVID-19. All visits have been cancelled and meetings are being conducted via telephone conferencing and Skype.

Contact is maintained for updates and developments, in the first instance, with YOI Parc on a fortnightly basis. This is achieved via telephone conference / briefings representatives of YOI Parc and all relevant Youth Justice Services.

Discussions will be held between YOS Officers and the secure estate to establish the most effective communication methods to replace direct contact / planning meetings / reviews / licence arrangements.

When contacting children, in the secure estate, discussions can include:

- Safeguarding – any concerns expressed by the child?
- Welfare
- Family contact arrangement for the child during lockdown period
- Financial situation/money for calls to family etc.
- Advocacy

- Contact methods for the children for YOS staff and families
- Provide any information needed/check understanding of situation

YOS Officers will maintain regular contact with the secure estate staff and the child. This will ensure that any information regarding Early or Executive releases are communicated in a timely manner.

YOS Officers will contact the child's immediate family regularly, to provide reassurance. YOS Officers will notify family members that there is an expectation that they will transport a young person upon release. In the event that the young person is not returning home, alternative accommodation will have been sourced prior to release and, if appropriate, a travel warrant will be obtained.

### **Appropriate Adults (AA)**

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS has an AA duty rota. Should the Police contact the YOS for AA representation, the following procedures will be followed:

- Gwent Police will assess the need to take children into the custody unit
- Gwent Police will consider bail, RUI and future VA options as outcomes to reduce the need for AAs
- Should custody be assessed as necessary, Gwent Police will strongly seek family members and friends for AA role
- Custody unit staff will inform YOS at point of request for an AA, if someone in the custody unit has declared that they have the coronavirus or symptoms or have stated they were self-isolating and why prior to arrest. All appropriate information will be shared with YOS, especially in relation to the coronavirus.
- YOS staff will ask the triage questions when AAs are requested; the manager will oversee this process.

The AA will ascertain from custody staff whether the child is:

- Experiencing a high temperature (fever)
  - Experiencing a new continuous cough
  - And/or they have been self-isolating due to residing with a person displaying the above symptoms.
- If custody staff respond positively to any of the above, then the AA will liaise with their line manager.

In all cases, PPE will be provided by Gwent Police and must be worn by YOS staff at all times, whilst in the Custody Unit. Gwent Police will ensure accommodation will facilitate appropriate social distancing, as per Government guidance.

- For all other AA requests, once the above triage questions have been asked and confirmed as "no", staff should confirm all efforts to establish a family member or friend as AA. If no family or friend is available, YOS staff will confirm social distancing arrangements. YOS AA will request to speak to the child. The

YOS member can speak with the child to confirm responses to triage questions.

- Before leaving to undertake the role of AA, YOS staff MUST check that PPE equipment will be provided and what that entails / includes and how they will obtain it.
- Before leaving to undertake the role of AA, YOS staff MUST also ensure that they have collected PPE available from the YOS offices, at Mamhilad to supplement the PPE provided by Gwent Police, if needed.
- YOS staff will only enter custody while wearing / using appropriate PPE equipment and this must be worn at all times.
- YOS staff will not undertake the transporting of children, at the end of any AA duties.
- YOS staff will take any sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes or other PPE equipment available to them from their YOS, for use after leaving the custody unit.
- If there are any further concerns or issues, following the above procedures being considered, YOS staff MUST communicate with Team Managers for support and clarification and direction regarding AA duties.

### **Assessments**

Initial, review and closure Asset Plus assessments and Bureau assessment will be completed via telephone or virtual communication methods.

It is acknowledged that the quality of the assessments may reduce due to virtual interviews. Furthermore, access to information held by other agencies may not be forthcoming during a time where many services are closed and staff redeployed.

Any outstanding information required will be recorded on the AssetPlus or Bureau assessment, and this will be followed up as soon as practically possible.

### **Priority Groups**

- Future Behaviours - ROSH – High / Very High
- Safety & Wellbeing (vulnerability / exploitation) – High / Very high
- Likelihood of reoffending – High / Very High
- Child Protection cases (usually covered in above second bullet point)

### **Risk Management Arrangements**

In relation to high / very high-risk statutory cases, these cases will be reviewed in case management discussions and supervision and will be considered within the virtual Risk Management Panel process, via MS Teams. Clear and robust plans will continue to be implemented in response to these reviews, with necessary modifications put in place as a result of COVID-19.

### **Prevention and Out-of-Court Disposal Cases**

The service will continue to engage with Prevention and Out-of-Court Disposal cases; all assessment, review and planning, relating to these cases, will be modified in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

## **Exploitation Cases**

These cases will remain medium / high/ very high risk cases. These will be reviewed via the Risk Management Panel Process.

## **COVID-19 Case Practice Response**

Our usual practice has had to change due to workers not being able to make home visits, as a result of social distancing requirements; therefore, the service has to be creative in the way it makes contact with children and their families. The use of texts, emails, FaceTime, WhatsApp and Skype is encouraged and will be used to keep in contact and engage with children.

Workers will now be expected to contact children and their families daily, if necessary but certainly weekly, to ensure that they know that support is available to them and that usual service is continuing. Signposting, to support mechanisms, will be provided to families to help them cope with the lockdown and restrictions.

Any ISS interventions will be complied with, whilst implementing full guidance from both Welsh and UK Governments and utilising the appropriate PPE.

It is acknowledged that families may experience added pressures at home, due to schools being closed. Teenagers are often free to go out; however, they are now expected to stay in the home environment, which may create more pressure for them, their parents and families. We will aim to provide our families with resources to support this difficult situation.

They may also be concerned about the COVID-19 restrictions and symptoms. COVID-19 advice and guidance will be provided to families, by YOS workers. Daily COVID-19 Senior Management Meetings are held to ensure that teams are updated with advice and guidance, as it changes, to reflect new information received.

In appropriate circumstances only, YOS staff may wish to discuss with their line manager the possibility of a face to face contact. Any face to face contact will respect the social distancing protocols and health and safety procedures. The presumption is that staff will not enter family homes without the agreement of a YOS Manager and only in exceptional circumstances.

If there are imminent Risk of Serious Harm concerns to others, the Case Manager will follow usual procedures by contacting the Seconded Police Officer, 101 reporting or 999 depending upon their seriousness and urgency of the situation. Similarly, the YOS will continue to submit any Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns to Children's Services Single Point of Access (SPOA) team.

All contacts are to be recorded on the Childview electronic case management system, as a contact, entitled:  
COVID-19 crisis contact with (name and relationship to young person)

## **Management Oversight for ChildView recordings during Covid 19**

Case Managers, following discussion with Line Manager, will record a contact entitled: COVID-19 planning.

This may include consideration of:

- Risk levels
- Risk management plan.
- Communication and contact strategy for all professionals involved in the YOS contact/communication plans.
- Resources to be used, with the child – content of contact sessions.
- Form of contact/communication with children/families and frequency.
- The voice of the child and the parent / carer will be captured in discussions, with case holders.
- Communication method preferred by the family and not what is easier for the case holder (where possible). This must fulfil current safety guidance, relating to COVID-19.

## **Panels and Bureaus**

The YOS will consider proportionate assessment and reports as above. Virtual Referral Order panels will be attempted, using a variety of communication / conferencing methods, each ensuring that the voice of the child is captured. Ultimately, Bureau Panel is a police decision-making process, in order that YOS can complete assessments and reports, schedule the panels and seek agreement re participation methods, for all involved and deliver outcome and associated interventions. However, police will consider how they capture the child's and parents' / carers' signatures on documents required by the police, for their processes. If panels are to be cancelled / postponed, it will be a police decision (in communication with the YOS).

If the police postpone Bureau Panels, this will affect children receiving their sanctions and starting their interventions. If Gwent Police postpone, YOS Police Officers will need to not triage cases through to YOS for allocation for future panels after postponement is lifted, as any assessments will be weeks out of date and will not meet National Standards. Therefore, no new cases should be passed to YOS and Gwent Police should "hold" outcomes/sanctions not YOS.

## **Reparation Hours**

During the Covid 19 period, reparation hours will be completed via the use of resources such as educational You Tube videos that staff agree. After giving time for the child to watch them, the staff member will then discuss them with the child. The suitability of videos will be decided by the relevant staff members. Staff will consider ways of continuing to provide opportunities for young people to complete their reparation hours but only if it is safe to do so and complies with social distancing and government advice and guidance.

## **Victims and Restorative Justice**

The YOS Seconded Police Officer will continue to liaise with the YOS Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) to ensure that contact is made with victims via telephone. It is acknowledged that convening victim impact assessments, via telephone conferencing, is far from ideal; however, it is important that victims continue to have a voice. The VLO will continue to contact and update victims who have requested ongoing services.

Victim impact sessions will continue to be delivered, as part of case management interventions.

## **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

The seconded CAMHS practitioner will continue to provide consultations to staff and will maintain regular telephone contact with children and young people. The young people assessed, as requiring acute interventions, will be contacted more frequently.

Young people's safety plans will be adapted to reflected the additional pressures and anxieties caused by COVID-19.

## **Substance Misuse Interventions**

Similarly, Substance Misuse Intervention will continue via telephone and other technologies. The level of contact will be determined by the individual level of risk, need and intervention.

## **ETE**

Monmouthshire & Torfaen schools remain open for the children of key workers, and for children who are deemed vulnerable. The ETE worker will continue to engage and support vulnerable young people known to YOS, via telephone and other technologies.

The YOS Education Officer will continue to cross-reference the data received from the schools with the YOS caseload, and notify the relevant Case Manager of any developments.

## **Supervision**

The COVID19 pandemic requires all YOS staff to work from home. This can heighten anxieties and create a sense of isolation. Indeed, decisions and assessments usually made with input and reflection from peers are increasingly made in isolation. It is therefore essential that supervision continues.

As far, as is possible, supervision will be the normal agreed format; however, it is acknowledged that modifications and flexibility will need to be available, in order to ensure that staff are fully supported.

Managers will continue to be available on a daily basis to discuss complex cases and to provide emotional support.

### **Team Meetings**

Team Meetings will be held via MS Teams, as per the normal timetable. A Team Meeting will be convened urgently, should circumstances require it.

YOS regional and YJB national meetings will continue via teleconferencing. Managers contributing to the meetings will send updates to the team to ensure that the latest information is shared.

MCC issues a daily Bulletin to all staff outlining the latest developments.

### **Staff working locations**

All Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS staff are currently working from home and are able to remotely access emails and the case management recording system.

Team members are aware that if necessary, they may be re-deployed to support other essential and critical services.

All Children's Services teams have their own laptop. They have also been allocated Smart phones and are therefore equipped to continue service delivery from their home environments, without much disruption. Wellbeing and practical support is offered to the team to ensure they can manage their working commitments around their increased family pressures. No difficulties are envisaged in this area, due to the existing agile working arrangements. Equally, when the COVID19 crisis ends, the team should be able to revert to their office-based positions without difficulty.

### **Staff Well-Being**

At this difficult time, it is important that we take time to look after ourselves. Everyone will adapt differently to working from home and social isolation, and there is no right or wrong way, so it is important for people to find the way that works best for them.

Staff are encouraged to maintain contact with their line managers and colleagues to discuss any issues or concerns they may have.

### **Overview**

During this period of crisis, the situation will remain fluid and may change without significant notice. Therefore, the team is expected to be 'office ready' and prepared for every eventuality; however, safety and wellbeing will remain the paramount

consideration.

Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service will continue providing the best quality service possible, within the confines of the COVID-19 restrictions. We will strive to create opportunities where innovative ideas can be considered and trialed where possible, ensuring it is safe to do so to maximise the opportunity to reach as many children as possible.

We will also work closely with our partners, who we value as part of our service, to ensure that they are included in supervision and team issues and are supported to help young people and enhance service delivery in their usual way.

### **YJB Contacts**

In the event that you are required to contact the YJB, the Wales regional contacts are:

Sue Thomas  
Mark Cox

07989130696  
07825860597

[Sue.Thomas@yjb.gov.uk](mailto:Sue.Thomas@yjb.gov.uk)  
[mark.cox@yjb.gov.uk](mailto:mark.cox@yjb.gov.uk)

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### **Parc YOI/Secure Estate**

Locked down in place for Parc currently. All visits cancelled. Need to contact other establishments as needed. Communication needs to be on a case by case basis. Discussions need to be had between case managers and the secure estate to establish communication methods instead of direct contact/planning meetings/reviews/licence arrangements such as telephone/WhatsApp/FaceTime?

When contacting children in the secure estate discussions can include:

- Safeguarding – any concerns expressed by the child?
- Welfare
- Family contact arrangement for the child during lockdown/coronavirus period
- Financial situation/money for calls to family etc.
- Advocacy
- Contact methods for the children for YOS staff and families
- Provide any info needed/check understanding of situation

### **Appropriate Adults**

- Gwent YOS' respectively ask Gwent Police to consider the need to take children into the custody unit
- Ask Gwent Police to consider bail, RUI and future VA options as outcomes to reduce the need for AAs
- Ask Gwent Police to strongly seek family members and friends for AA role
- Custody unit staff to inform YOS at point of request for an AA if someone in the custody unit has declared that they have the coronavirus or symptoms or have stated they were self-isolating and why prior to arrest. All appropriate information to be shared with YOS especially in relation to the coronavirus.
- YOS staff to ask the triage questions when AAs requested.
- If coronavirus concerns/information is shared and no parent/carer/older sibling or friend can be identified the YOSs will try and facilitate AA services via telephone.
- For all other AA requests once the above triage questions have been asked and confirmed as "no" staff should confirm all efforts to establish a family member or friend. If no family or friend available YOS staff to ask about social distancing arrangements. YOS AA to ask to speak to the child. We can also ask the child any symptom etc.
- Before leaving to undertake the role of AA YOS staff MUST check that PPE equipment will be provided and what that entails/includes and how they will obtain it..
- YOS staff to only enter custody unit if full PPE equipment is provided by Gwent Police and this must be worn at all times.
- No transporting of children at the end of any AA.
- Staff to take any sanitiser, anti bac wipes or other PPE equipment available to them from their YOS for use after leaving the custody unit.
- If after all the above has been considered and an AA request is received and all information gathered if YOS staff have any concerns please speak with a Team Manager.

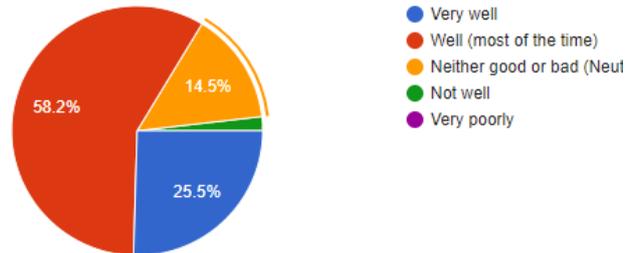
**During this period of crisis our situation will remain fluid and may change without much notice so please be 'office ready' and prepared for every eventuality, however; please be assured that all efforts to ensure your safety will be maintained at all times.**

## Survey results- 26/06/2020

### Question 3:

In general, how are you and your family coping during the COVID-19 restriction (lockdown) period?

55 responses



### Question 4: What are the main difficulties you are experiencing?

Boredom

It can be difficult to arrange activities for the young people we support

bored children

boredom, not being able to go out when i wanted to .

occupying the children

staying in for such a long time

kids being off ,home schooling , keeping them occupied . two kids with additional needs.

lack of money

dealing with having a teenager at home all the time whilst I was shielding

seeing family

don't know

staying indoors and everyone being in together was difficult .

my son has adhd , so very difficult time for us .

Son struggles with mental health

making the children understand what they can and cant do during COVID-19.

Not being in work

Alfie is staying up late to speak to friends

Arguing

I couldn't get my hair cut

my children have had great difficulty coping during lockdown . One suffers with anxieties , the other has autism . it has been very hard for us .

fed up

difficult having all contact on the telephone , realise it cant be helped but difficult.

Cabin fever

Being stuck in and no routine has had a negative effect

lack of routine, motivation

being stuck in

having to stay in , boredom

Not being able to leave the house.

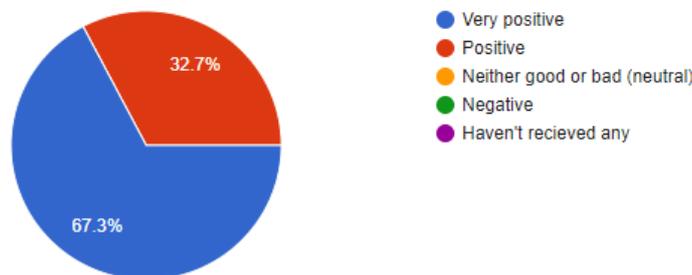
difficult behaviour of teenager

Son not listening to rules  
 problems with neighbours / daughter  
 Nothing  
 none at the moment .  
 keeping my son in  
 not being able to go out  
 missing family, have a 6 month old baby that family cant see .  
 keyworkers so all working which can be difficult .  
 keeping them in and occupied  
 keeping a teenage boy indoors  
 the queues , delivery slot for food .  
 Boring, not being able to go out  
 difficulties with a young autistic child  
 Boredom and anxiety  
 no difficulties at the minute  
 Boredom  
 so many people in the house all the time , its very loud  
 Children are bored ! Lack of routine at night so kids are sleeping during the day and up all night.

**Question 5:**

How do you feel about the support offered from the Youth Offending Service (YOS) at this time? (Telephone/virtual contacts etc.)

55 responses



**Question 6: Do you have any comments about the support you've received?**

**Question 7:**

No  
 Adam Nash has been very consistent and helpful. good communication  
 Karen and Curtis have both been brilliant keeping in touch with us and making sure we are all OK  
 Curtis was very helpful to my son and he seemed better with Curtis' help  
 YOS help ( Sarah ) has been amazing . really helpful and useful information when needed.  
 YOS have done all that is possible at the difficult time and kept us informed and supported with regular contacts  
 Everybody has been very helpful and supportive . Andrew always helps and listens when I ring and gets things sorted for me . It was nice to have calls to check we were ok . Caitlin said she enjoyed

doing reparation like that ( online ) and she learned things she from it , she was surprised that she enjoyed reparation . It was good to have reminder texts for reparation and other things The YOS has helped me more than anyone else.

Absolutely fantastic support from Andrew , really enjoy discussion with him. sms texts are useful  
no

Jay has enjoyed the on line reparation . He has really learned from it and taken an interest in the recycling .

Adam has been brilliantly with my son throughout . Anthony was really helpful in checking out options for what is next .

It's been very positive having a phone call to check we are ok and to talk about what's been going on Everyone on the YOS has been understanding with regards to both children . They have tried everything to support and motivate . Virtual reparation for Neesha has been different but YOS have been understanding and tried to pick information that Neesha could learn from and have an interest in . text reminder service has been good

Yos have been brilliant , very supportive . Jenna is really great and helpful . Alfie is doing well at reparation and would prefer to get some hours done this way than not do anything , he is enjoying it.

It had been very helpful.

Darran was very helpful .

Really nice that YOS checked in with us to see if we were all ok  
very supportive at this time.

very good support received

Felt supported and each step was fully explained.

It has been outstanding. Anton has been a huge help and we are very grateful.

Karen lewis' regular support has been amazing , very helpful . She is a very kind person . Curtis has been supportive too.

Karen that supports myself has been a great help. We seem to get on well and it's nice to have someone to talk over my worries with and have that extra support.

Andrew was very helpful and aware of the situation with neighbours. Very kind towards daughter and congratulated her for how she dealt with the situation .

The support has been great for Ella

I have had regular telephone calls from Sarah Gunn and Jenna which I am happy with .

Darran and Karen Lewis have been very supportive and helpful .

I've had fantastic support

it been been good , helpful

Eric has been calling and very helpful and supportive

Pleased with what was offered by YOS in difficult circumstances . My son interacted more and he sometimes can have difficulty with this .

Good support offered , but wanted Louis to have a harsher sentence initially as I think he would have learned more from it .

Very pleased with the support offered to Simon . Since the lockdown he has had regular contacts and help and advice from Paul and Eric. Paul helped him with his questions for college and checks in weekly with him that he is ok and coping . Simon has been better at home and in general since YOS help .

All good

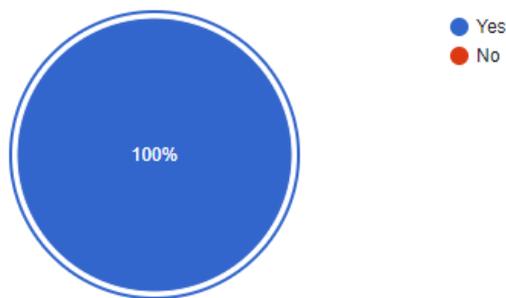
The support I have received from Jane Clutton has always been amazing, although we have only been able to chat over the phone since covid, Jane has always without fail supported me with regular contact over the phone and positive advice. Thanks to teams Jane is able to continue my

support face to face and we are able to start the next program of support. Also Jane has been a massive support with my core meetings before and during covid over Teams. Thanks Jane. Fantastic support from Andrew . I feel that Xavier has learnt from this . Karen Lewis is very helpful , she has helped me with letters and rings every week . I can contact her whenever I need to . IT is nice to have the phone calls to check all ok from Paul. I'm completely blown away with the help and advice I am currently receiving. It really is helping me to manage my daughters feelings and behaviours.

**Question 7**

Are you happy with the type and nature of work/sessions offered?

55 responses

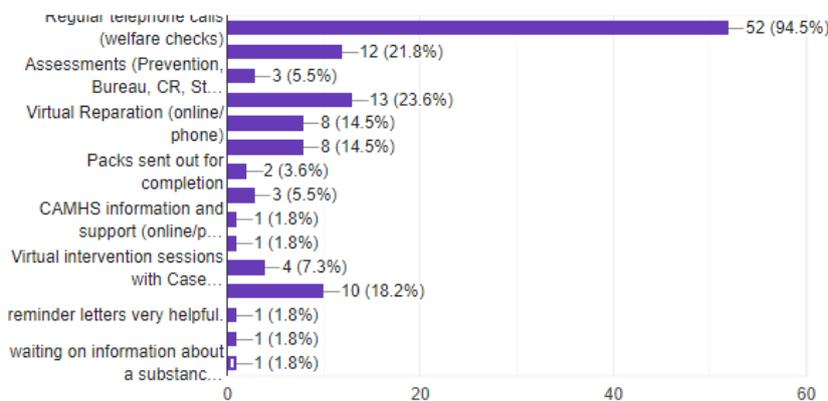


**Question 8: If you answered no, please comment why. (No responses)**

**Question 9:**

Please confirm which resource you have been offered (please select all that apply)

55 responses



Regular telephone calls (welfare checks)- 52 people  
 Virtual parenting support-12 people  
 Assessments- 3 people

Face to face contact (socially distant)-13 people  
 Virtual reparation- 8 people  
 Virtual education support- 8 people  
 Packs sent for completion- 2 people  
 Substance misuse information and support- 3 people  
 CAMHS Information and support- 1 person  
 Virtual panels/meetings- 1 person  
 Virtual intervention sessions with case manager- 4 people  
 SMS reminder service- 10 people  
 Reminder letters- 1 person  
 Knife crime sessions (face to face, socially distant) - 1 person

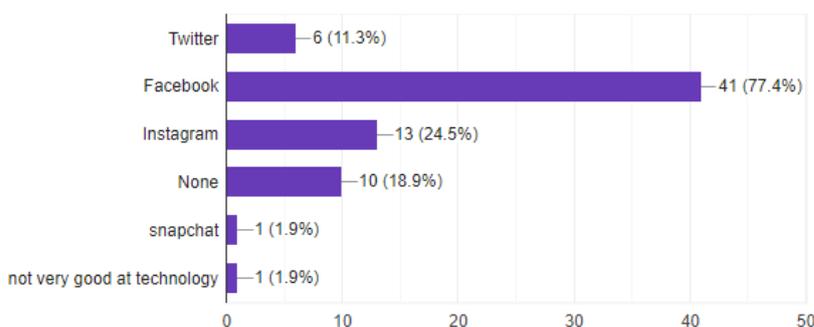
**Question 10: Is there anything else you would like the YOS to consider providing that would assist you?**

No  
 no  
 not at present  
 Following an incident a fortnight ago , the police were referring for an extension for curtis to help further . I haven't heard back from that yet , waiting for YOS to ring me if it is possible .  
 nothing I can think of  
 I'm waiting on information from the college about transferring . This has been discussed so I'm just waiting on an answer from the college.  
 no  
 more info on drugs as dont know what was discussed with son and worried what son is doing . He will turn 18 soon and really concerned about him and how he is coping.  
 No all covered  
 don't think so  
 no ,all good  
 No , really happy with help given.  
 to check what is happening about the substance misuse referral  
 Yos has done everything they can.  
 We are waiting on information about Xavier changing colleges but that has been discussed with Anthony and we are waiting on info from the new college .

**Question 11:**

What social media do you use?

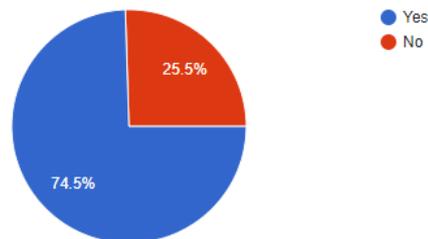
53 responses



### Question 12:

Would you like to see more information from the YOS on social media?

51 responses



### Question 13: Any additional comment that you would like to make?

No

I just so happy with it all and with Adam Nash he was good with my boy and help with the family so I am pleased

had a very positive experience across the board for our young people  
Facebook would be useful .

The YOS did more than they should have for me . Over and above.

Really appreciate the help given to me.

My support worker has been a very positive help through this difficult time just having a chat and too off load my worries have been a great help

The YOS have been really understanding and supportive for both .

Karen has been fantastic, she never fails to make me smile. And she is most helpful

ON line reparation was good . I was happy to get the hours done this way .

Darran very helpful especially prior to COVID . it is a shame re the lockdown as I realise that there are restrictions of what could be done but I think my son would have responded well with more contact and he never answers his phone and difficult for him to talk on the phone. It would be good to have a facebook account or instagram to follow especially if useful info on there for parents or young people.

Thank you so much to Anton for the brilliant work he has done with Dylan and for checking up on us to see if we was all OK during Lockdown. He reassured us and explained everything clearly so we knew exactly what was happening. Thank you from us all.

No

No

I think it would be good for people to see what YOS is about and most people have facebook , so think this would be a good idea.

think Facebook would be a good idea as teenagers use this and can look on YOS site for useful information or may get in touch for advise.

Doing netflix work (online reparation) was good, better than doing reparation outside.

really pleased with the help and support offered by YOS .

I think a lot of parents would be interested in any courses that you could offer. The NVR Course in particular.

## Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS – Transition to Recovery Plan (COVID-19) August 2020

### **Introduction:**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the national 'lockdown' response to this, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020, has presented a number of challenges for the Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS, having to urgently restructure services, interventions and partnership arrangements. The Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS has responded with professionalism, creativity and innovation, in order to maintain effective governance and service delivery, throughout this period. The service has worked closely with all stakeholders: governing bodies, strategic partners and children and their families, to ensure that the quality and effective impact of service delivery is maintained. This response has highlighted the ability of all those involved in the service and its strategic partners to adapt and diversify, under the most demanding of circumstances. This period of transition to recovery presents an opportunity to reflect on the responses to the crisis and plan to ensure the continuance and development of effective and innovative practices used, in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children supported by Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS.

Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS was the only YOS, in Wales, which participated in the HMIP thematic inspection, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in July 2020.

### **Overview of the Impact on Governance and Service Delivery and Challenges Faced**

With the implementation of 'lockdown', on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, all public buildings were immediately closed. All members of the Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS staff were directed to work from home. This had an immediate impact on case practice, management and support of staff and wider governance. There were implications for peer working, meetings and staff supervision. The closure of schools also meant that some staff were working from home, while 'home-schooling' their own children or looking after younger children, due to child-care facilities being unavailable. The significant restrictions implemented, regarding social distancing, had substantial implications for service delivery and partnership working. Standard home visits were initially cancelled, other than those that were absolutely necessary to address risk and vulnerability concerns. All home visits were risk assessed with the worker's line manager.

The completion of assessments and interventions, statutory processes and access to strategic partnership resources were all impacted; schools closed and teaching staff were working from home, limiting their contact with children and their families; courts were suspended for 8 weeks, except for remands and custody cases held overnight, raising issues surrounding the support of children and their families

whose cases were scheduled; there were significant concerns regarding Appropriate Adult (AA) provision and its safe operation; Secure Estates closed to all external visitors, further isolating the most vulnerable children who are supported by the YOS.

On 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020, Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS was notified that the service would be one of 7 YOSs , but the only YOS in Wales, to be subject to a thematic inspection by HMIP. The purpose of this inspection was to gather intelligence regarding YOSs' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and their restructuring and redesign of case management and service delivery and strategic partnership working. This involved scrutiny of data, casework, and meetings with a range of staff, managers and the LMB, all of which had to be completed virtually.

### **Successes and How the Youth Justice Partnership Overcame Barriers to Delivery and Maintain Service Provision.**

The response of Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS, to these exceptional and unprecedented circumstances, was immediate and addressed all areas of service delivery. The whole staff team was involved in planning and adjusting practice to meet changing circumstances and priorities.

A Continuity and Delivery Plan was created to ensure there was a shared response from Gwent Youth Offending Services / Teams in relation to all areas of work, thus ensuring service provision consistency and to identify Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS's specific requirements.

Whilst this plan was agreed at Service Manager Level, it continues to be subject to amendment in response to changes in the COVID-19 pandemic and or Government advice and guidance.

The Gwent YOS Service Managers met to agree areas of work to ensure consistency of service delivery across Gwent, during the COVID-19 pandemic. YMC meetings also increased to occurring on a monthly basis, in order to ensure collaboration and peer support across YOSs in Wales.

Electronic communication systems continued to be an invaluable resource in communicating with staff and partners and the transferring of information; all YOS staff had access to the full range of electronic systems. Immediately, Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS staff transferred to virtual working, using 'Skype' and 'MS Teams', in order to successfully facilitate peer support and staff meetings, management supervision and support of staff and meetings with the Local Management Board and strategic partners, such as: Gwent YOS Service Managers, Gwent Monitoring and Review Panel and the YMC. Business Support staff worked to ensure that staff had access to relevant systems, when needed. Creative and innovative processes were created, in order to maintain contact and support children and their families and to complete assessments and undertake interventions, including the use of alternative technologies, such as telephoning, text and video calling. Where possible, contact was made in outdoor spaces, such

as gardens, where strict social distancing could be maintained. The Service Manager worked collaboratively with the Gwent YOS Managers and Gwent Police, in order to ensure the safe provision and operation of AA, as a result of an agreed protocol. The Monmouthshire and Torfaen Service Manager appropriated comprehensive PPE, which was available to all YOS staff. From the 15th June, 2020, HMCTS announced that Courts would begin to resume hearings, with a number of social distancing and safety measures in place. Regarding Secure Estates, fortnightly telephone conference calls were held with all stakeholders and an individual 'point of contact' was established to facilitate contact and updates for individual children. Children are now able to make contact with families and support workers, via virtual platforms. Families/carers also now have the opportunity to have face-to-face visits.

All aspects of the thematic inspection were completed successfully and on time; virtual communication was managed extremely effectively. Initial verbal feedback from HMIP is positive, in particular, the feedback from the children and their families via a YOS survey on the impact of COVID 19 and how the YOS service were providing services in relation to this.

### **The Impact on Local Priorities and the Priorities Being Set for the Remainder of the Year.**

One of the main impacts on priorities, both locally and internally, will be implementing a successful YOS recovery plan within the changing landscape of the pandemic. This will be required to be flexible and constantly reviewed in order to respond to relevant changes.

Some progress that has been to date, in relation to face-to-face contact with children and young people using social distancing for outdoor contacts, will need to be reviewed and alternative, creative methods identified. The changing weather will mean this has to be done in the near future.

The new National Standards Improvement Plan will need to be embedded, within the remainder of the year and changes in working practice, in relation to Covid-19, will be an ongoing concern.

In relation to the YOS priorities of reducing first time entrants and reoffending, there will be a challenge in monitoring and managing the workflow as a result of Covid-19 restrictions and cases not being processed through courts and police stations in a timely manner. It is hard to anticipate the full impact of this, at the current stage but this delayed process of offences/pre court disposals is likely to impact all youth offending services. Our priority is to maintain our core functions; however, there will be an emphasis on development of services moving forward.

One of the key impacts of the restrictions has been the removal of many desistance pathways for children and young people in Monmouthshire and Torfaen. The area

of Monmouthshire is very rural and, as YOS staff are not currently able to transport children and young people, this has had a significant impact on services provided.

The impact of digital poverty in our area has been magnified due to the restrictions. This has been addressed in our service by the YOS ETE Worker and this will continue to be prioritised as part of the YOS recovery plan.

### **The Impact on Resources, Including a Breakdown of Resource Allocation for the Year**

The Continuity Plan provides the framework to continue to work to mitigate the emerging risks of COVID-19 and maintain service. Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS will continue to work with all governing bodies, strategic partners and children and their families, in order to adapt and amend the plan, in response to changes in the COVID-19 pandemic and or Government advice and guidance. It is, therefore, anticipated that there will very limited disruption to service and that staffing, provision and service delivery will be maintained throughout.

### **Appendix B**

**B5: YOT budget**  
Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board			224,082	224,082
Local Authority			888,875	888,875
Police	57,842		84,055	141,897
Police and Crime Commissioner			51,780	51,780
Probation	28,653		5,000	33,653
Health	42,794		39,402	82,196
Welsh Government			242,422	242,422
Other				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,289</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,535,616</b>	<b>1,664,905</b>

Although it currently continues to be preferred that staff work from home, in response to the partial easing of 'lockdown' restrictions, the Service Manager has undertaken a series of steps to allow for the partial reopening of the YOS offices. This has involved a comprehensive risk assessment, guidance for staff and a booking system which all facilitate strict social distancing, the maintenance of hygiene practices and information for effective 'track and trace' of personnel, if needed.

Savings made during the COVID 19 restrictions, in relation to travelling costs, could be used to access technology to improve the digital poverty experienced by children and young people in the area.

Staffing levels have remained constant during the period and it is not anticipated this will be affected in the foreseeable future. However, YOS staff have required a much higher level of support, whilst working under the restrictions and the impact of caring for family members/young children has had an impact on their ability to complete the full range of tasks/duties. YOS staff, who have been shielding/self-isolating, have been fully supported and this will continue. However, this has impacted on the service, as a whole, as they have been unable to complete face-to-face duties.

The YOS will provide training for staff in carrying out non face-to-face assessments, in order to ensure the best practice is being carried out, particularly in relation to speech, language and communication needs.

During this period of crisis, the situation will remain fluid and may change without significant notice. Therefore, the team continues to be expected to be 'office ready' and prepared for every eventuality; however, safety and wellbeing will remain the paramount consideration.

Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service will continue providing the best quality service possible, within the confines of the COVID-19 restrictions. We will strive to create opportunities where innovative ideas can be considered and trialled where possible, ensuring it is safe to do so to maximise the opportunity to reach as many children as possible.

We will also work closely with our partners, who we value as part of our service, to ensure that they are included in supervision and team issues and are supported to help children and enhance service delivery in their usual way.

The YOS will be implementing a plan to address any areas of development identified through the thematic inspection. There is a YOS Improvement Plan in place, in order to address practice and service delivery in line with the recent National Standards Audit.

#### **At the Police Station:**

a) The needs of children:

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS has an AA duty rota. Should the Police contact the YOS for AA representation, the following procedures will be followed, in order to ensure that children are supported by an Appropriate Adult, with social distancing and safety measures in place:

- Gwent Police will assess the need to take children into the custody unit
- Gwent Police will consider bail, RUI and future VA options as outcomes to reduce the need for AAs
- Should custody be assessed as necessary, Gwent Police will strongly seek family members and friends for AA role

- Custody unit staff will inform YOS, at point of request for an AA, if someone in the custody unit has declared that they have the coronavirus or symptoms or have stated they were self-isolating and why prior to arrest. All appropriate information will be shared with YOS, especially in relation to the coronavirus.
- YOS staff will ask the triage questions when AAs are requested; the manager will oversee this process.

The AA will ascertain, from custody staff, whether the child is:

- Experiencing a high temperature (fever)
  - Experiencing a new continuous cough
  - And/or they have been self-isolating due to residing with a person displaying the above symptoms.
- If custody staff respond positively to any of the above, then the AA will liaise with their line manager.

For all AA requests, once the above triage questions have been asked and confirmed as “no”, staff should confirm all efforts to establish a family member or friend as AA. If no family or friend is available, YOS staff will confirm social distancing arrangements. YOS AA will request to speak to the child. The YOS member can speak with the child to confirm responses to triage questions

- The child/young person must receive legal advice from a solicitor, in order for the interview to take place. However, the solicitor may be providing their service virtually, in some cases.

b) The needs of staff:

In all cases, PPE will be provided by Gwent Police and must be worn by Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS staff at all times, whilst in the Custody Unit. Gwent Police will ensure accommodation will facilitate appropriate social distancing, as per Government guidance. Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS staff should also ensure that they have PPE at their disposal from the YOS, in case of unexpected shortages at the Custody Unit. These include: hand sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes gloves, masks, plastic aprons and visors. YOS staff will only enter custody while wearing / using appropriate PPE equipment and this must be worn at all times. YOS staff will not undertake the transporting of children, at the end of any AA duties. If there are any further concerns or issues, following the above procedures being considered, YOS staff MUST communicate with Team Managers for support, clarification and direction, regarding AA duties.

c) Strategic Partnerships:

The Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS have worked in partnership with Gwent YOS Service Managers and Gwent Police, in order to ensure that the processes in place, at the Custody Unit, enable children to be fully supported, while comprehensively managing the risks associated with COVID-19 to themselves and others. Gwent Police put stringent measures in place, such as PPE a one-way-system, floor markers, hand sanitiser stations, interview / meeting rooms that enable social distancing and providing photographs of the layout of the unit, in order that staff and children could familiarise themselves with it before attending.

**Recommendations and Actions:**

The YOS Management Team will continue to monitor and respond to any change in guidelines in relation to staff attending the police station.

**Out of Court Disposals:**

The YOS have continued to run Bureaus and Community Resolutions clinic processes, with some modifications initially as a result of restrictions. These meetings have been held virtually and children and young people have been included in this process. There have been some challenges in relation to full participation, in relation to a virtual capacity. This is being addressed moving forward by liaising with families and ensuring that they have access to the necessary IT.

Interventions, under O OCD, has continued to be provided via a range of methods including face-to-face, socially distanced sessions and virtual/telephone intervention.

Face-to-face reparation sessions were initially suspended but this is being reviewed and face-to-face sessions are being planned, as appropriate, in line with the COVID-19 restrictions. During the COVID-19 period, all reparation hours have previously been completed via the use of online resources such as educational You Tube videos and BBC IPlayer. This has been fully supported by an allocated YOS Support Worker. As 'lockdown' restrictions continue to ease, the service will risk assess the possibility of commencing one-to-one projects. The YOS has received positive feedback with regards to the online reparation being completed by children and young people, via the YOS Survey completed during the recent thematic inspection.

a) The needs of staff:

No additional needs in relation to O OCD.

For reparation work, suitability of videos will be decided by the relevant staff members. Staff will consider ways of continuing to provide opportunities for young

people to complete their reparation hours but only if it is safe to do so and complies with social distancing and government advice and guidance.

b) Strategic Partnerships:

The service will continue to engage with Prevention and Out-of-Court Disposal cases; all assessment, review and planning, relating to these cases, will continue to be modified in light of the COVID-19 crisis. Bureau panels continue to be held, in order that the YOS can complete assessments and reports, schedule the panels and seek agreement as regards participation methods for all involved and deliver outcome and associated interventions.

The YOS Seconded Police Officer will continue to liaise with the YOS Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) to ensure that contact is made with victims, via telephone. It is acknowledged that convening victim impact assessments, via telephone conferencing, is far from ideal; however, it is important that victims continue to have a voice. The VLO will continue to contact and update victims who have requested ongoing services.

Victim impact sessions will continue to be delivered, as part of case management interventions.

Recommendations and Actions:

- **Operational** – All OOCOD assessment reviews to be completed in a timely manner. YOS to develop a more robust Quality Assurance process in this area.
- **Operational** – Analysis of risk and safety and wellbeing in Asset Plus assessments needs to be improved- YOS Managers and Senior Practitioners to complete training with staff via YOS APIS processes.
- **Operational** - To further develop Viewpoint end of intervention evaluations to evidence outcomes for children and young people and identify gaps in service provision.
- **Strategic** – Provide a consistent system for evaluating practice across the service to allow the YOS LMB to evaluate the impact of provision, processes and practice in order to set performance improvement targets. This will allow for consistent improvement on delivery.
- **Strategic** – YOS to improve the quality of performance information provided to the Local Management Board. LMB to use this information to provide scrutiny of YOS performance. This to include information on disproportionality.

**At Court:**

a) The needs of children:

Normal working practices of the Youth Court were suspended for 8 weeks, when the 'lockdown' period was initiated, except for remands and custody cases held

overnight. From the 15th June 2020, HMCTS announced that Courts would begin to resume hearings, with a number of social distancing and safety measures in place. The Court would operate to facilitate social distancing, in all areas. Appropriate interval slots have been factored into the listing and defendants have been advised of any revised times for surrendering to their bail. Black/yellow hazard tape will be used, around the building, as a physical barrier/visual reminder to people to obey distancing advice. Posters and information bulletins repeat this advice at all HMCTS premises. The courtrooms the courts will operate to allow everyone to maintain their distance from one and other. If assessments can be started at Court safely, they will be whilst the young person is present. This will depend on the identification of a suitable space to allow social distancing.

Given the current situation, it is important to ensure the Asset Plus process is adhered to, that any young person subject to a custodial sentence is interviewed and a vulnerability assessment completed. Following this assessment, the Asset Plus custody stage is sent to Youth Custody Service Placements Team at the earliest opportunity. This should be completed via Connectivity, where possible. In the event that Connectivity is not possible, the Asset Plus should be sent via secure email address:

b) The needs of staff:

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS has a Statutory Team rota and the allocated member of staff will contact Police custody and the Court to determine whether any young people have been detained overnight.

In the event that a young person is placed before the Court a number of procedures will be followed, in order to maximise the safety of all those involved.

The YOS Officer will ascertain, from detention staff, whether the child is:

- Experiencing a high temperature (fever)
- Experiencing a new continuous cough
- And/or they have been self-isolating due to residing with a person displaying the above symptoms.

If detention staff confirm that the young person is not displaying either symptoms and has not been self-isolating, YOS staff will follow the protocol agreed by Gwent YOS Service Managers for attendance at the Gwent Police Custody Suite, as outlined in the Appropriate Adult section of this plan.

Verbal stand-down reports will be considered where appropriate and where there has been an assessment within the last 3 months.

YOS Operational Managers will consider if additional staff members are required to attend Court dependent upon risk and need. In this event, they would travel separately to maintain social distancing.

Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS will continue to provide weekend 'on call' cover, as outlined by the duty rota.

In the event that bail support or an electronically monitored curfew is being considered, the YOS will complete a thorough assessment in view of the heightened risk linked to the COVID-19 restrictions.

c) Strategic Partnerships:

The YOS has had ongoing liaison with the Gwent Court Services which will continue to monitor the situation in light of any changes, due to COVID-19.

Recommendations and Actions:

- **Operational** – Update and amend the Court Outcome form, used across Gwent, to include a section to indicate that the YOS have received a copy of the warrant (if appropriate). Also to evidence that the YOS Court Officer has fully explained the Court Outcome to the child/young person and parent.
- **Operational** – To improve awareness of Court Processes, specifically where young people receive custodial sentences. Training to be provided to YOS staff via APIS sessions.
- **Strategic** – Provide a consistent system for evaluating practice across the service to allow LMB to evaluate the impact of provision, processes and practice in order to set performance improvement targets. This will allow for consistent improvement on delivery.
- **Strategic** – YOS to improve the quality of performance information provided to the Local Management Board. Local Management Board to use this information to provide scrutiny of YOS performance. This to include information on disproportionality.

**In the Community:**

a) The needs of children:

Case Managers have continued to record a contacts on all open cases: COVID-19 planning, which includes consideration of risk and safeguarding and the best contact method with regard to the original child/young person.

Usual working practices have had to change significantly, as a result of lockdown restrictions and social distancing measures. Therefore, the service has to be

creative in the way it makes contact with children and their families. The use of texts, emails, FaceTime, MS TEAMS, WhatsApp and Skype has been encouraged to engage with young people over virtual platforms, where appropriate. Staff have maintained regular contact with all open cases, during this period.

Signposting, to support mechanisms, will continue to be provided to families to help them cope with added pressures at home due to the restrictions. We continue to aim to provide a high level of support to our children and families with resources to support this difficult situation. Standard YOS procedures, for managing reporting of escalating risk and safeguarding concerns, remain as standard.

Children's safety plans have been adapted to reflect the additional pressures caused by COVID-19. All cases have been reviewed in case management discussions and supervision. All appropriate cases have been discussed in the virtual Risk Management Panel process, via MS Teams. Clear and robust plans continue to be implemented in response to these reviews, with necessary modifications put in place as a result of COVID-19.

Substance Misuse Intervention will mirror the contact policies of the YOS.

Exploitation cases continue to be monitored carefully in light of any changes in practice in relation to the COVID 19 restrictions.

All pupils are expected to return to school, in September 2020. The ETE worker will continue to engage and support vulnerable young people known to YOS. The YOS Education Officer will continue to cross-reference the data received from the schools with the YOS caseload, and notify the relevant Case Manager of any developments.

Virtual Referral Order panels will continue but will be reviewed in an ongoing basis in order to consider the appropriate timing of face to face panels using social distancing protocols.

Any ISS interventions will be complied with, whilst implementing full guidance from both Welsh and UK Governments and utilising the appropriate PPE.

The YOS Seconded Police Officer continues to liaise with the YOS Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) to ensure that contact is made with victims via telephone. It is acknowledged that convening victim impact assessments, via telephone conferencing, is far from ideal; however, it is important that victims continue to have a voice. The VLO will continue to contact and update victims who have requested ongoing services.

b) The needs of staff:

Daily COVID-19 Senior Management Meetings are held to ensure that teams are updated with advice and guidance and to reflect to new information received. YOS

staff will continue to discuss with their line manager any agreed face to face contacts. Any face-to-face contact will continue to respect the social distancing protocols and health and safety procedures. The presumption is that staff will not enter family homes without the agreement of a YOS Manager and only in exceptional circumstances. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Although staff continue to work from home, there is a desk booking facility for staff to work from the office, as needed. This will mitigate some of the concerns around heightened anxieties and the sense of isolation that some staff have experienced.

Supervision will continue using virtual platform and face-to-face, as appropriate. However, it continues to be the case that this has been more substantial than in normal circumstances, due to the additional pressures on staff who are managing childcare and other roles that affect them.

There is always a manager available, on a daily basis, to discuss complex cases and to provide emotional support.

Team Meetings will continue to be held via MS Teams, on a monthly basis, with additional meetings arranged where necessary.

YOS regional and YJB national meetings continue via teleconferencing. Managers contributing to the meetings continue to share relevant updates to the team to ensure that the latest information is shared.

There has been some impact on the service, with regards to the redeployment of staff, specifically around the YOS CAMHS Worker and Track and Trace support. This is being closely monitored.

In order to facilitate agile working, all YOS staff have their own laptop. All staff have been allocated Smartphones and are therefore equipped to continue service delivery from any location, with minimal disruption.

Although it currently continues to be preferred that staff work from home, in response to the partial easing of 'lockdown' restrictions, the Service Manager has undertaken a series of steps to allow for the partial reopening of the YOS offices. This has involved a comprehensive risk assessment (Appendix C), guidance for staff (Appendix D) and a booking system (Appendix E), which all facilitate strict social distancing, the maintenance of hygiene practices and information for effective 'track and trace' of personnel, if needed.

Strategic Partnerships:

The LMB is collaborating with other strategic partners e.g. the opening of community venues.

LMB meetings continued virtually, during the lockdown period and LMB members participated in the recent thematic inspection.

Meetings with other stakeholders have continued virtually e.g. Serious Organised Crime Group.

Recommendations and Actions:

- **Operational** – YOS to develop a more robust process including quality assurance methods around reviews in relation to all interventions. Gatekeeping processes and management information to be used to embed this within YOS practice.
- **Operational** – YOS to review processes around ABCs, including assessment, recording and dealing with non-compliance.
- **Operational** – YOS to ensure that all diversity needs are fully evidenced and addressed via assessments and interventions. Training to be provided to YOS staff via APIS sessions.
- **Operational** – YOS to improve performance around planning meetings and amending processes around this. YOS performance information to be developed.
- **Strategic** – Provide a consistent system for evaluating practice across the serve to allow LMB to evaluate the impact of provision, processes and practice in order to set performance improvement targets. This will allow for consistent improvement on delivery.
- **Strategic** – YOS to improve the quality of performance information provided to the Local Management Board. Local Management Board to use this information to provide scrutiny of YOS performance. This to include information on disproportionality.

**Secure Settings:**

a) The needs of children:

All secure estates have implemented procedures in response to COVID-19. All visits have been cancelled and meetings are being conducted via telephone conferencing and TEAMS. Families/carers now have the opportunity to have face-to-face visits. However, professional visits continue to be held virtually. The YOS has agreed to fund the cost of email communication with young people, in the secure unit.

YOS Officers are maintaining regular contact with secure estate staff and the child. They also liaise closely with the child's immediate family during sentence and release. Face-to-face visits will resume following changes to the guidance.

The usual pathways for identifying suitable accommodation are still in place, with necessary meetings taking place virtually.

b) The needs of staff:

Contact is maintained for updates and developments, in the first instance, with YOI Parc on a fortnightly basis. This is achieved via telephone conference / briefings representatives of YOI Parc and all relevant Youth Justice Services.

When face to face visits resume, these will be subject to YOS health and safety procedures e.g. PPE equipment.

c) Strategic Partnerships:

LMB will continue to be provided with information on YOS custody cases including accommodation issues, ETE or resettlement support pathways.

There will continue to be regular communication with secure service providers and YOS Managers Cymru to address all strategic issues, in respect of all young people in custody/secure accommodation.

Recommendations and Actions:

- **Operational** – APIS session to be provided to YOS staff to improve the quality and detail of case recording for children and young people in custody. This will include capturing all communication with the Placement Team and any ongoing communication with the establishment.
- **Operational** – YOS to address any connectivity issues to improve the timeliness of information to be shared with the YJB and custodial estate. This will be led by the YOS Information Officer.
- **Strategic** – Provide a consistent system for evaluating practice across the serve to allow LMB to evaluate the impact of provision, processes and practice in order to set performance improvement targets. This will allow for consistent improvement on delivery.
- **Strategic** – YOS to improve the quality of performance information provided to the Local Management Board. Local Management Board to use this information to provide scrutiny of YOS performance. This to include information on disproportionality.

**On Transition and Resettlement:**

- The needs of children:

All relevant information, in relation to work in the community and in custody, will apply in this area. Circumstances are more complex, due to Covid-19 restrictions and key Resettlement and Desistance pathways have decreased. This has impacted on intervention around Resettlement and Transitions; however, as a service we are taking steps to minimise the impact of this. In terms of ETE pathways which are often key to Resettlement these have been compromised by the Covid -

19 crisis. Training opportunities have been closed other than some minimal virtual pre training support. The economic decline is having an impact on employment and training opportunities and this is exacerbated for some of the young people that the YOS are working with. The YOS ETE officer continues to be proactive in addressing these deficits and offering remote access opportunities for children and young people. The YOS have improved access to CSCS card training support using virtual resources and training staff in this area.

The YOS continues to provide a Substance Misuse service to young people open under Resettlement via remote processes initially and laterally face-to-face to sessions have been carried out, as appropriate.

Support with constructive use of leisure activities has been challenging and this is often a key Transition factor. The YOS have addressed this via the introduction of a Summer Activity programme open to children and young people, using on line and community based activities with incentives for participation. The Youth Service have also provided additional support by appointment.

- The needs of staff:

The multi-agency YOS Resettlement panel has continued on a virtual basis and all relevant cases have been discussed and reviewed as appropriate.

As with all YOS Community and Pre-Court interventions, YOS staff have been fully supported. Resettlement and Transition support has continued virtually, via phone contact and face-to-face socially distanced sessions as appropriate, to ensure that Children and young people are fully supported.

The YOS Management Team have continued to prioritise, plan and support all YOS Resettlement and Transition pathways and interventions and to ensure that planning is considered at the earliest opportunity to encourage successful transitions. YOS Service meetings have continued virtually to ensure that there is full communication with all YOS staff

- Strategic Partnerships:

Full attendance, by all appropriate agencies at YOS Resettlement panel, has been difficult to achieve and the move to virtual panels has not improved this. This has been raised in YOS LMB meetings with strategic partners and a piece of work is on-going regarding addressing this issue.

There are on-going blockages to accessing suitable accommodation for children and young people with challenging behaviour and this continues to be raised with strategic partners and in YOS LMB meetings.

The YOS has developed quality relationships with some of the main accommodation support providers, which has assisted greatly with information sharing and behaviour management support.

### Recommendations and Actions

- **Operational** – SMART Intervention plans for Resettlement with a focus on transitions need to be completed and signed by the young person and uploaded onto Childview.
- **Strategic** – provide a consistent system for evaluating practice across the serve to allow LMB to evaluate the impact of provision, processes and practice in order to set performance improvement targets. This will allow for consistent improvement on delivery.
- **Strategic** – YOS to improve the quality of performance information provided to the Local Management Board. Local Management Board to use this information to provide scrutiny of YOS performance. This to include information on disproportionality.
- **Strategic**- YOS Service Manager to continue to address strategic partnership attendance at YOS Resettlement panels via YOS LMB.

**Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS Service Manager: Chesney Chick**

**Signature:**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020**

**Monmouthshire & Torfaen YOS LMB Chair: Keith Rutherford**

**Signature:**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020**