



YJB Corporate Plan 2013–16 and Business Plan 2013/14

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Foreword

The *Youth Justice Statistics 2011/12* provide the backdrop to our Corporate Plan for 2013/14. The statistics showed a continuing and welcome reduction in the number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time, and in those receiving disposals in and out of court, including custodial sentences. But the statistics also show a reoffending rate by young people of around 35%, and the rate is much higher for those young people leaving custody.

The youth justice system has therefore been set new challenges by the Secretary of State for Justice – including acceleration in the pace of reform, and driving improvements in results and cost-effectiveness. Most notably, the release of *Transforming Youth Custody: Putting Education at the Heart of Detention* sets out ministerial concerns about the current costs and outcomes of youth custody. The consultation paper proposes the introduction of secure colleges, with potentially a much wider and more diverse range of secure estate providers.

These challenges are reflected in our priorities for 2013/14, which are to:

- reform the secure estate for children and young people;
- drive improved cost-effectiveness across the youth justice system;
- target work to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes in the youth justice system; and
- promote a youth justice system that successfully resettles young people into their communities.

In Wales, the YJB has worked closely with the Welsh Government to shape the consultation on proposals to improve services for young people at risk of entering, or already in, the youth justice system. The consultation responses have informed our planning in Wales as we continue to work with the Welsh Government during 2013/14.

Local youth justice services are now operating in the context of greater local accountability and more financial responsibility, as well as (in England) changing landscapes in health and education. Police and crime commissioners are developing their role and influence, and this will be especially important in relation to the continued need to focus on the prevention of youth crime. The YJB will support local youth justice teams to navigate these changes.

Over the past year, the YJB has implemented new approaches in the way we work with our partners in youth justice, placing effective practice at the heart of our organisation. A lighter touch risk-led approach to monitoring, increased local flexibility set against revised national standards, peer review, more local accountability for the costs of custody, and an effective practice framework are now all embedded into our delivery model.

This plan sets out to build on this groundwork and places the YJB in a strong position as leader of the youth justice system, to work with the government to deliver reform.

With reduced financial resources available to the youth justice system, focusing on 'what works' is essential and we will continue to do this through an effective practice framework. Areas of particular priority in 2013/14 will be the over-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic young people in the youth justice system and the transition of young people from the youth to adult criminal justice system, a time of extra risk and vulnerability. A key area of activity will be preparation for the introduction of AssetPlus, the new national assessment and planning interventions framework for young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending. We expect this to enable the youth justice system to deliver improved outcomes for young people and reduced offending by ensuring that comprehensive information is available about each young person and their needs.



Frances Done
Chair



Lin Hinnigan
Chief Executive

Who we are and what we do

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is a non-departmental public body created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to oversee the youth justice system for England and Wales. We are sponsored by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and our Board members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice.

The youth justice system is made up of a network of organisations working together to administer justice and help children and young people live free from crime. In addition to the YJB, the network consists of:

- youth offending teams (YOTs) – local partnerships made up of partners from the police, the Probation Service, local authority children’s services and health services;
- the police and the Crown Prosecution Service;
- the courts and the judiciary; and,
- secure accommodation providers – under-18 young offender institutions (YOIs), secure training centres (STCs) and secure children’s homes.

Our vision

The YJB believes in, and is committed to achieving, a youth justice system where:

- young people receive the support they need to lead crime-free lives and contribute positively to society;
- more offenders are caught, held to account for their actions and stop offending;
- victims are better supported; and,
- the public are protected.

Our strategic objectives 2013–16

We will work in partnership across the community and commission the secure estate to:

- prevent offending;
- reduce reoffending;
- protect the public and support victims; and,
- promote the safety and welfare of children and young people in the criminal justice system.

The YJB also has an organisational objective for 2013–16 to:

- continue to develop the YJB to deliver our mandate, working closely with government and stakeholders to deliver a coherent, distinctive and effective youth justice system in a time of reduced resource.

This objective will be delivered through continuous improvement in the way we operate; further detail is provided in the 'Priorities and activities for 2013/14' section on pages 18–20.

Our planning this year must reflect our own financial and resource challenges. We have therefore focused our work for 2013/14 on four key priorities that have been agreed with ministers. These are set out below.

Our priorities for 2013/14

To support the government to deliver its policy objectives, and support the youth justice sector most effectively, the YJB will base its work around the following priorities in 2013/14.

Reforming the secure estate for children and young people

This priority reflects our focus on reforming the secure estate for children and young people, both in order to reduce unit costs, but also to improve outcomes. Access to suitable and sustainable education will be at the heart of these reforms.

Driving improved cost-effectiveness across the youth justice system

This priority sets out to ensure the support we give to young people who offend is cost-effective and the youth justice system delivers value for money.

Targeted work to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes in the youth justice system

This priority sets out to ensure the YJB's approach incorporates a renewed drive for better outcomes and a justice system in which the public has confidence.

Promoting a youth justice system that successfully resettles young people into their communities

This priority reflects the drive for a reinvigoration of the 'rehabilitation revolution', with a renewed focus on better outcomes from the youth justice system.

To deliver these priorities the YJB has developed a series of key actions for 2013/14 that will support the youth justice system. These are detailed on pages 21–31 of this plan.

How we deliver our services

The YJB is made up of a dedicated group of staff with a range of expertise; many of these staff have a youth justice practice background.

Our main functions include:

- monitoring the operation of the youth justice system;
- advising the Secretary of State on the operation of the youth justice system, national standards, and on how the aim of preventing offending by children and young people can most effectively be pursued;
- identifying and disseminating effective practice across youth justice services;
- making grants to YOTs and other organisations to support development and delivery of effective practice;
- commissioning a distinct secure estate for young people; and,
- placing young people in custody.

In order to access the wider resources and know-how required to effectively deliver our programme of work, we work in close partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, as set out below.

Working with young people

In carrying out our work, we are committed to listening to the views of young people so that their needs are understood and so we can shape effective services to protect and support them. By encouraging young people's understanding and participation in the youth justice system, we and practitioners are better placed to design interventions that will successfully address offending behaviour. This is reflected both in our work with YOTs and in the secure estate, where we specifically consult with young people when reviewing and developing services.

Working with the Ministry of Justice and other government departments

We work closely with our sponsor unit in the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and with other government departments to ensure that national policies and legislation support better outcomes for the youth justice system and can be effectively implemented.

We work with the Home Office to prevent anti-social behaviour and youth crime, including youth violence. We work with the Department of Health and local commissioning bodies so that high quality health services are provided (including mental health and substance misuse services) to young people in the youth justice system.

We work with the Department for Education (DfE) to help ensure education services meet the educational, training, and job readiness needs of children and young people, across custody and the community. In the coming year, we will work closely with DfE and MoJ on the proposal to introduce secure colleges.

In Wales, we work closely with Welsh Government departmental leads so that devolved government policies are aligned with the implementation of youth justice policies.

Working with YOTs and the wider youth justice system

We support YOTs and local youth offending services to deliver against the three youth justice outcome indicators set by government: reducing first-time entrants to the criminal justice system, reducing reoffending and reducing the use of custody.

Our revised approach to supporting local youth justice services to deliver against these outcomes has bedded in well. It includes a framework for self-assessment for use by local professionals, and a sector-led peer review process, enabling high-performing YOTs to share their skills and expertise.

We will continue to provide more transparent and easily accessible data to help local youth justice services benchmark their performance and direct their resources to deliver the three youth justice outcomes.

We use a risk-led process (liaising with HM Inspectorate of Probation) to intervene in the poorest performing YOTs and help them to develop and deliver post-inspection and other improvement plans.

We also continue to work with practitioners to identify and share effective practice through a range of other approaches. Our quarterly prioritisation process helps allocate YJB resources where they are most needed. Our thematic and incentive-based work, such as reducing the use of remand and the Pathfinder project, operates within this collaborative approach.

Working with secure accommodation providers

We work in partnership with secure accommodation providers to deliver regimes that both protect the public and keep young people safe, addressing the causes of their offending behaviour. This means working closely with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), local authorities, and private contractors to ensure continuous improvement and value for money, and to improve delivery of specialist services. We develop and disseminate best practice in areas such as safeguarding, behaviour management and restorative justice.

Our Placement Service is responsible for placing remanded and sentenced young people into secure establishments. We work with YOTs to ensure the most up-to-date information about young people is available to the Placement Service and the secure estate so that the most appropriate placement decision is made, and so the correct interventions are delivered to young people. Our service includes a process for reviewing placement decisions and ensures that transfers between establishments are managed in a timely and appropriate manner, following consultation with all those with interests in the young person's welfare.

Working with the voluntary and community sector

Voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations make a critical contribution to youth justice. The sector providers help to deliver services in community and custodial settings – for example, the provision of an advocacy and independent person's service, work with young people serving custodial sentences for sexual offences, and support for better resettlement for young people leaving custody.

The voluntary and community sector is a key partner in our drive to identify and disseminate effective practice through its delivery of youth justice services and ability to innovate. In 2013/14, we will work collaboratively with VCS organisations in order to learn from their expertise and broaden the youth justice evidence base.

Volunteers

More than 6,000 volunteers work with YOTs in a range of different roles, including restorative justice, as appropriate adults for young people in police custody, as mentors, in prevention or education schemes, and with families.

Working with other national and regional partners and stakeholders

We work with a wide range of other national and regional partners to influence and shape a coherent youth justice system. While all our staff play a role in working with our partners, our Board members and executive management team lead aspects of our stakeholder engagement personally. In particular, our Board members bring a diverse range of experience and knowledge in areas including local authority and voluntary sector youth justice and other youth services, policing, judiciary, education and health services. Our stakeholder strategy aims to make best use of this experience to deliver the YJB's strategic objectives and to support partners to develop new ways of working. This includes working with:

- local authority consortia to support them in developing new approaches for providing resettlement services for young people leaving custody;
- the secure estate and educational establishments, to improve access to education during, and after, custody;

- NOMS, the Probation Service, and professional associations and groups such as the T2A Alliance, to improve young people's transitions between the youth and adult justice systems;
- charities, faith groups, and groups working to promote and protect the rights of children to share information on areas of mutual interest;
- YOT management boards, local government and local authorities to sustain and improve YOTs;
- the judiciary, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, magistrates, youth court officials, and youth court judges, to help improve court practice, reduce unnecessary use of custody and improve confidence in community sentences; and,
- the police, including the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), police and crime commissioners (PCCs) and the College of Policing.

We work closely with Her Majesty's inspectorates, in particular HM Inspectorate of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, Ofsted, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, and Estyn, to ensure standards are met and to inform inspections.

We also work with national bodies representing local service providers in England and in Wales, including those representing local government, children's services, education services, YOT managers and secure accommodation providers.

Working with the academic community and other research bodies

In 2013/14, we will further deepen and strengthen our links to the academic sector to ensure that our advice and guidance is based upon the latest UK and international research.

To ensure that the YJB remains informed about developments in relation to effective practice, and delivers the most up-to-date and relevant information to the youth justice sector, the Effective Practice Division is responsible for establishing and maintaining links and partnerships with those in the wider effective practice and research communities.

An example of this is the YJB's partnership with the Social Research Unit. The Social Research Unit is an independent charity dedicated to using research to improve the health and development of children, primarily in Europe and North America. The charity has over 50 years' experience in research into child development, children's services and policy. The charity's partnership with the YJB is therefore a valuable component of the YJB's Effective Practice Identification and Dissemination (EPID) framework, providing the YJB with support in guiding services and information about how to develop innovative practice, as well as support in identifying and disseminating information about research-proven programmes and practices.

In Wales, the relationship with the academic sector is best exemplified by the Wales Practice Development Panel, overseen by the Head of YJB Cymru. This panel provides the YJB Cymru Effective Practice and Innovation Branch with advice, guidance and scrutiny to ensure that the operation of the effective practice cycle in Wales is itself effective. The panel meetings are timed to inform the delivery of the EPID framework, and regular contact is maintained between YJB Cymru and the effective practice team.

Our strategy for 2013–16

Drivers for change

The innovative and increasingly comprehensive use of early intervention and diversion strategies by YOTs, backed by strong partnerships with other agencies, has helped to reduce first-time entrant levels to less than half those of 2008/09. The targeted work by the YJB and local partners to reduce the inappropriate use of custody has helped reduce custodial numbers by more than a third since 2008/09. These achievements are driving significant change and enabling reductions in the use of costly services, such as the court system and secure estate beds. These changes are also making space for YOTs and the secure estate to focus their resources on the most persistent and prolific offenders. Working with this cohort is, however, more challenging and requires excellent delivery of effective practice in order to address the complex needs of this group of young people.

In November 2012, the Secretary of State for Justice announced the government's priorities for youth justice. The government has set the YJB and the youth justice system the challenge of ensuring the support we give to young offenders is cost-effective. The government is also clear that we must improve outcomes and deliver a system in which the public has confidence – with a renewed drive to reinvigorate the 'rehabilitation revolution'. In delivering these improvements, we have also been tasked with increasing the use of payment by results and creative partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors. This document sets out how the YJB will support the youth justice system to meet these challenges in a local social welfare landscape that is witnessing significant change.

The government's consultation paper on the secure estate, launched on 14 February 2013, reinforces the need for better value for money and improved educational provision in the secure estate. The YJB is committed to working with the government and our key partners in youth justice to ensure that any changes to the secure estate are as well informed and effectively planned as possible, to ensure the secure estate remains distinctive and child-focused.

In Wales, the drivers for change are different where matters are devolved to the Welsh Government. The consultation on proposals to improve services for young people at risk of entering, or already in, the youth justice system outlines many of these drivers, and our YJB Cymru Division is working closely with the Welsh Government to develop policy responses to the consultation that seek to support the prevention of offending in Wales.

Our strategies are also shaped by the local landscape. The local landscape has changed significantly over recent years and continues to change, with greater local accountability and responsibility, including the transfer of key funding from both the YJB and UK Government departments to local authorities, and the opportunities created by local integrated offender management. The YJB will work supportively and in partnership with local authorities to make the most of the limited resources available to the youth justice system itself. Perhaps more than ever, we need to build strong relationships with the wider group of service

providers connected to reducing youth offending. The YJB must also support local youth offending services to work effectively with key local decision-makers, such as police and crime commissioners and, in England, clinical commissioning groups.

Our work to improve the effective practice evidence-base will play a key part in meeting these challenges, as will the introduction of AssetPlus. There is much more to learn and share on a range of challenges, including, for example, the continuing over-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic young people in the criminal justice system, the disproportionately high number of looked-after children coming into the system, child sexual exploitation in groups and gangs, child development and psychology, and the important issue of speech, language and communication skills deficits.

This plan demonstrates our intention to develop the best possible understanding of the drivers of youth offending in today's society and to work intelligently and efficiently in partnership across England and Wales to achieve better outcomes.

How we will measure delivery

The performance of the youth justice system is measured against the indicators shown below.

1. The number of first-time entrants to the justice system: young people aged 10 to 17 years receiving a Reprimand, Final Warning¹ or conviction (the MoJ publishes this data quarterly, by local authority).

There were 36,677 first-time entrants to the youth justice system in England and Wales in 2011/12, a fall of 20% since 2010/11. The number of first-time entrants has fallen by 67% from the peak of 110,815 in 2006/07.

2. The percentage of young people reoffending (MoJ publishes this data quarterly, by local authority).

The reoffending rate for young people was 35.8% in 2010/11. This represents a 2.5 percentage point increase compared to 2009/10, and a 2.1 percentage point increase compared to 2000.²

¹ Under the provisions of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012, Reprimands and Final Warnings have been repealed and replaced by a new out-of-court disposals framework, which offers Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions as formal disposals. This change took effect on 8 April 2013.

² As the overall rate of reoffending has risen in the last few years, the number of young people in the reoffending cohort has gone down, with particular reductions among those with no previous offences and those receiving pre-court disposals. Because of this, those young people coming into the criminal justice system are, on balance, more challenging to work with (*Youth Justice Statistics 2011/12*).

3. The number of custodial disposals³ per 1,000 of the 10 to 17-year-old population.

The number of custodial disposals per 1,000 of the 10 to 17-year-old population was 0.87 in 2011/12. This represents a 3.4% decrease compared to 2010/11 and a 15.9% decrease compared to 2009/10.

In 2011/12, custodial disposals accounted for 6.6% of all disposals given at court, with the total number of custodial disposals falling by 6% between 2010/11 and 2011/12, and by 48% since 2001/02.

In Wales, performance will also continue to be measured against the Wales youth justice indicators agreed with the Welsh Government, as well as the English/Welsh indicators above. The performance areas specific to Wales are:

- increase engagement in education, training and employment for children and young people in the youth justice system in Wales;
- increase access to suitable accommodation for children and young people in the youth justice system in Wales; and,
- ensure that children and young people in the youth justice system in Wales with identified substance misuse needs gain timely access to appropriate specialist assessment and treatment services.

Transparency

We also publish other key data, to allow the public to judge performance on these indicators, including information about:

- the demographics of young people with proven offences;
- proven offences which have resulted in a disposal;
- remand decisions for young people;
- disposals given to young people; and,
- young people in custody, including information about behaviour management in the secure estate.

This information is published annually as the Youth Justice Statistics, and the local-level 2010/11 figures were published on 31 January 2013. Our most up-to-date published data on youth justice can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-statistics

³ A disposal is a formal sanction such as a Final Warning from the police, or a sentence at court.

How the YJB strategy will enable the delivery of savings

We will deliver significant savings over the remainder of the Spending Review period. By the end of 2013/14, we will have delivered savings of £154m against the 2010/11 baseline. The reform of the secure estate is anticipated to deliver further savings.

The YJB's strategy for dealing with this financial challenge has been to:

- maximise savings from having fewer young people in custody by decommissioning beds in the under-18 secure estate. Between April 2010 and April 2012, the YJB decommissioned four under-18 young offender institutions and further decommissioning is underway;
- use our commissioning function to generate efficiencies across remaining secure estate contracts;
- invest in activities that will avoid young people being placed in custody where that is not the most suitable place for them (contributing to our ability to decommission);
- drive down YJB operating costs, ensuring that these reduce by at least the same rate as reductions in the Youth Justice Good Practice Grant paid to YOTs; and,
- reduce the Youth Justice Good Practice Grant by the minimum necessary to operate within the available budget.

This strategy has been adopted because YOTs' work, supported by the YJB, has been an essential element of the effectiveness of the youth justice system, and, hence, a critical enabler of the financial savings being obtained across the system.

For 2013/14, there has been a 14.6% overall reduction in our Youth Justice Good Practice Grant to YOTs, from £107.8m in 2012/13 to £92.1m in 2013/14. Part of this reduction has been due to the transfer of Home Office prevention funding from the YJB/YOTs to police and crime commissioners (PCCs), phased over the past two years and totalling £14.5m. PCCs now hold Home Office funding, for which YOTs are able to bid. The reduction of £8.9m of Ministry of Justice funding accounts for 8.3% of the reduction in the grant from 2012/13.

Strategic objectives for 2013–16

Our strategic objectives for 2013–16 are set out below.

Strategic objective 1: We will work in partnership across the community and commission the secure estate to prevent offending

Intervening early to prevent children and young people from offending is more effective than dealing with the consequences of offending, when patterns of behaviour are well-established and costs to the criminal justice system are high. In promoting effective practice and overseeing youth offending services, we will continue to focus on reducing the number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system.

The large reductions in numbers of first-time entrants have shown that evidence-based early intervention and diversion, delivered through multi-agency partnerships, can be effective. In order to sustain these reductions, we will promote joined-up youth crime prevention and work with partners to monitor and support the implementation of the new out-of-court disposals framework among local areas.

Local strategies to prevent first-time entrants should be in place in every area, in order to allow agencies and communities to resolve low-level offending in a way that repairs harm but seeks to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of young people. Local children's services should address the needs of young people who are most at risk of offending, and YOTs should be key partners in this work.

Specific resources for prevention are now more dispersed – among police and crime commissioners (PCCs) and, in England, the Troubled Families programme and the Early Intervention Grant. All have a role to play in youth crime prevention, and the YJB will continue to promote the use of this funding to help deliver our strategic objective. We will also work to improve information-sharing across agencies to aid youth crime prevention.

In Wales, YJB Cymru will promote targeted youth crime prevention within the context of the Welsh Government's contribution to early intervention and prevention, including the distribution of the Youth Crime Prevention Fund and the Families First Programme.

Strategic objective 2: We will work in partnership across the community and commission the secure estate to reduce reoffending

Reducing reoffending has multiple benefits, including fewer victims, a safer society for all, and savings to the public purse.

With fewer young people in the youth justice system, those who make up the cohort today are more challenging to work with, and the reoffending rates among offenders with complex needs can remain stubbornly high. We have more to learn and more to achieve in reducing reoffending among this group.

Our strategy to reduce youth reoffending will focus on gaining the most detailed possible understanding of the characteristics of today's reoffending cohort in order to inform effective intervention. In 2013/14, we will undertake a project to identify the key drivers of high reoffending rates (see key action 19, page 23). This will be used to prioritise work as we move forward and will include direct work with YOTs with the highest reoffending rates. We will work with YOTs to improve their performance, and on key themes such as access to education, training and employment, suitable accommodation, and health services – particularly in respect of improving resettlement.

We will work to better understand and address over-representation of groups such as Black and Minority Ethnic young people and looked-after children, and ensure that the system meets the specific needs of these groups.

The research and effective practice development that the YJB, supported by the youth justice community, has been undertaking in recent years has broadened and deepened our understanding of the factors contributing to an increased likelihood of reoffending. This knowledge is being more effectively shared and built into AssetPlus, the new assessment, planning and interventions framework that we will be rolling out from 2013/14. The new framework is designed to enable practitioners to increase their understanding of the needs and risks of the young people they are working with, and, crucially, to help practitioners to identify and build on the strengths and protective factors that can help young people back on the path to success and away from an offending lifestyle. AssetPlus will provide a joined-up assessment across community and custodial settings.

The government has signalled its intention to explore the concept of secure colleges, recognising the importance of education in rehabilitation. In 2013/14, we must ensure this development is well informed by our knowledge of the important role of custody in preparing for resettlement and reducing reoffending. We will also work strategically with health commissioners, education providers and other partners to continue to improve access to resettlement services in the community and in custody.

Through the youth justice outcome indicators, we will continue to maintain a focus on reducing reoffending, monitoring progress and supporting YOTs to improve their performance, on a risk-led basis, where we have concerns about high or increasing reoffending rates. We will also review options for financial incentive models linked to improved outcomes for young people.

In Wales, work to reduce reoffending will build upon last year's detailed analysis of the needs of young people from Wales with prolific offending histories. This will include developing case management practice for these young people and continued delivery of the Wales resettlement programme.

Strategic objective 3: We will work in partnership across the community and commission the secure estate to protect the public and support victims

Public protection is at the heart of the role of those working in the youth justice system. As well as protecting the public through their work on reducing reoffending, youth justice practitioners intervene to identify and manage specific risks. The roll-out of AssetPlus from 2013/14 will include enhancements to aid practitioners in this important task.

Where offenders pose a high risk to the public, youth offending services work with Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) partners to manage these risks. We will work to further develop effective practice in MAPPA and other public protection approaches in 2013/14.

Victims of youth crime must feel they have been well served by the system, with their concerns listened to, their needs addressed and justice having been done. We will continue to support the youth justice system with effective practice in these areas and we will work to improve victim and public confidence in community sentences.

Young people involved in criminal groups and gangs can be at higher risk of becoming a victim of serious violence or sexual exploitation. We will work with the Home Office and others to help reduce victimisation among young people facing these risks.

Restorative justice not only plays an effective part in reducing reoffending by making a young person face up to the consequences of their actions, it also actively engages local people in youth justice. We will support the government's approach to increasing the use of restorative justice across the youth justice system.

Strategic objective 4: We will work in partnership across the community and commission the secure estate to promote the safety and welfare of children and young people in the criminal justice system

Children at risk of offending are a vulnerable group and addressing their welfare needs is a key part of preventing offending and reducing the risk of reoffending.

In developing our commissioning plans for youth custody provision, we aim to ensure a secure, healthy, safe and supportive place for children and young people. We aim to minimise the likelihood of harm through rigorous safeguarding and ensure that children are placed in the establishment best able to meet their needs.

In 2013/14, we will continue to ensure our work to place young people in custody is of the highest quality. We will invest in capital improvements to create safer environments and work to continuously improve the safeguarding and welfare knowledge and skills of the workforce in the secure estate and among YOTs.

The YJB maintains an overview of serious safeguarding and public protection incidents in the community and secure estate, and we will continue to learn from and act on the recommendations from serious incidents and deaths in custody.

Priorities and activities for 2013/14

Core business functions

The YJB delivers a range of activities as part of our statutory functions in order to help maintain a youth justice system that functions effectively and delivers value for money.

The key areas of this work are as follows.

Managing the secure estate provision

The Commissioning and Supplier Management Team fulfils the YJB's statutory requirements to commission the secure estate for children and young people as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (amended by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales Order 2000). Specifically, this includes:

- assessing future demand for secure accommodation for remanded and sentenced children and young people, and preparing future plans and submitting these to the Secretary of State for approval (planning);
- entering into agreements for the provision of secure accommodation (purchasing); and,
- monitoring the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services (performance and delivery).

The YJB will continue to monitor the performance of the secure estate to evaluate the performance of providers against service level agreements and contracts. This is undertaken through a risk-based assurance monitoring approach.

Our monitoring functions will inform performance interventions and the application of contract measures to ensure our providers deliver value for money and positive outcomes for young people placed in the secure estate. In addition, we will draw together thematic issues that arise across the secure estate.

We will manage secure estate provider performance, including the delivery of savings against contracts and service level agreements.

Placing young people in custody

The YJB Placement Service has responsibility for the placement of all children and young people under the age of 18 remanded or sentenced by a court to custody. This is achieved by assessing information provided to the YJB from youth offending services, which identifies an individual's risks and needs, then making placement allocations that address these risk factors to help reduce the young person's likelihood of further offending.

The YJB:

- places young people into establishments that can most effectively manage individual needs and risk factors;
- facilitates timely, two-way transfer of appropriate key information and ensures that records are accurately maintained; and,
- makes the best use of available resources across the secure estate, including the specialist units, when placing young people.

Oversight and support for youth offending teams

We will continue to monitor YOT performance across England and Wales, and deliver improvement support and intervention to the poorest performing YOTs. This includes maintaining effective relationships with YOTs, their management boards and wider partners, which together make up local youth justice partnerships.

Our work will include identifying and addressing poor performance, informing a risk-led inspection framework and requesting ministerial intervention where necessary.

This YJB activity includes:

- identifying a contact for each YOT;
- conducting quarterly performance reviews;
- analysing youth justice data and information;
- promoting a voluntary youth justice self-assessment framework;
- coordinating a peer support framework; and,
- providing targeted performance improvement support.

Effective practice

The YJB's effective practice cycle is now fully integrated into the work of our organisation. Through this cycle, we identify sector priorities and commission and publish research and practice materials in order to assist youth justice partnerships in driving forward improvement in their services.

In delivering its responsibilities in relation to effective practice, the YJB will:

- on an annual basis, identify the priorities for the YJB's effective practice framework in collaboration with the youth justice sector; and,
- co-ordinate an annual 'call for practice' from the sector on the basis of the identified priority areas.

In 2013/14, our call for practice will additionally engage with the voluntary and private sectors.

We have developed a new dissemination strategy to ensure that our effective practice outputs reach the intended audience and are presented in a form that is relevant and applicable for practitioners; this will be implemented in 2013/14.

We will continue to support the development of the youth justice workforce through the Youth Justice National Learning and Skills Framework, which is overseen by the sector-led Workforce Development Council. The framework encompasses learning and continuing professional development resources to enable participants to develop skills, competencies and professional qualifications. The framework is supported by Local Partnership Advisers, staff from YJB Cymru, and the YJB Workforce Development lead.

The Youth Justice Interactive Learning Space (YJILS) contains a wide range of learning materials, with effective practice modules and resources being developed. The new Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate focuses on the principles of effective practice, giving participants an opportunity to demonstrate how they use these principles in their individual role, with tutor-marked assignments and observed practice.

We will continue to deliver effective practice workforce development tools for use by the sector, with a particular focus in 2013/14 on:

- identifying the best delivery models for YJILS and the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate;
- developing the Youth Justice Skills Matrix, which identifies core youth justice skills, and preparing a range of supporting materials to help services to embed the matrix; and,
- providing appropriate support for the sector-led Workforce Development Council.

Corporate Services

Our Corporate Services Division delivers functions that equip the YJB to meet its objectives, leading on strategy development and business partnering across the YJB. By providing analytical, financial, human resources, governance and planning functions, we will ensure our organisation is able to respond to today's challenges.

In 2013/14, the team will:

- develop an information management strategy; and,
- assess the options for the delivery of financial, human resources and procurement transactions through shared services, then undertake a project to deliver the approved option.

Key action projects delivering our 2013/14 priorities

Our work in 2013/14 will consist of a range of projects based around our four priorities.

Reforming the secure estate for children and young people

This priority reflects our focus on reforming the secure estate for children and young people, both in order to reduce unit costs, but also to improve outcomes. Access to suitable and sustainable education will be at the heart of these reforms.

Plans to deliver this ministerial priority are at an early stage. As these develop, the YJB may need to adjust the delivery of other key actions to ensure the priority is addressed at the necessary pace.

Key action 1

Deliver a programme of work to implement the government's plans to reform the secure estate for children and young people.

The key actions 3 to 6 below will be informed by the outcome of the secure estate reform consultation and are therefore potentially subject to change.

Key action 2

Support the MoJ in any further consideration of proposals to transfer the financial responsibility for custody to local authorities.

Key action 3

Review options and develop a commissioning plan to procure additional secure estate capacity in the South West of England.

Key action 4

Undertake a capital project at Cookham Wood YOI to build a 180-bed accommodation facility to meet the needs of young people in London and the South East.

Key action 5

Develop an enhanced unit at Cookham Wood YOI to support those young people that present complex needs. This work will not progress until the government's plans for the under-18 secure estate have been agreed.

Key action 6

Deliver the safeguarding capital investment plan within under-18 YOIs and undertake in 2013/14 to create:

- a new exercise yard and shower facilities at Hindley YOI;
- a new exercise yard at Wetherby YOI; and,
- a new reception facility and exercise yard at Werrington YOI.

Driving improved cost-effectiveness across the youth justice system

This priority sets out to ensure the support we give to young people who offend is cost-effective and the youth justice system delivers value for money.

Key action 7

Carry out demand and supply analysis and forecasting for the secure estate population, in order to develop a commissioning model that details historic demand and forecasts future demand as accurately as possible, on both a national and regional basis. This will facilitate longer-term strategic planning for the secure estate.

Key action 8

Through monitoring capacity in the secure estate, undertake option appraisal exercises in order to recommend to the Secretary of State further decommissioning when appropriate.

Key action 9

Implement new contracts for the provision of advocacy services across under-18 YOIs and secure training centres, following competitive tender in 2012/13.

Key action 10

Oversee and evaluate the Youth Justice Reinvestment (Pathfinder) payment by results projects, working with local authorities to reduce the use of custody.

Key action 11

Provide information to YOTs on funding opportunities available to them to support the delivery of effective practice and improved outcomes for young people.

Key action 12

Review, in partnership with NOMS, the strategic approach to delivering electronic monitoring; Community Payback; junior attendance centres and the role of probation trusts in the youth justice system, in light of the Transforming Rehabilitation developments.

Key action 13

Provide detailed good practice guidance in respect of the minimum statutory requirements of YOTs and their management boards. This will support the continuance of the successful YOT model and encourage the retention of an identifiable governance body which has a primary focus on overseeing youth justice services and youth justice outcome performance (England only⁴).

Key action 14

Review the YJB's grant conditions to ensure our grants deliver value for money.

Key action 15

Review options for financial incentive models appropriate for application within the youth justice system, which can drive innovation, value for money, efficiency and improved outcomes for young people.

Key action 16

Manage the implementation of changes in response to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO), including:

- working in partnership with the MoJ to address issues with sentencing application following the changes within LASPO; and,
- overseeing and supporting YOTs in the implementation of changes to the out-of-court disposals framework.

Key action 17

Finalise the design and development of AssetPlus and commence its implementation to youth justice services. Design the evaluation for the framework for delivery in subsequent years.

Targeted work to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes in the youth justice system

This priority sets out to ensure the YJB's approach incorporates a renewed drive for better outcomes and a justice system in which the public has confidence.

Key action 18

Undertake analysis and thematic work to identify areas where the greatest impact can be achieved on reoffending rates, and, following this, focus on the actions most likely to be effective.

Key action 19

Continue to implement the new behaviour management and restraint policy, Minimising and Managing Physical Restraint (MMPR), across STCs and under-18 YOIs.

⁴ A similar action will be undertaken for Wales in 2014/15.

Key action 20

Deliver a workforce development programme in the secure estate, with a particular focus on:

- implementation of the workforce development strategy for secure establishments;
- development and implementation of the working with young people in custody programme;
- working in partnership with NOMS in respect of their recruitment programme; and,
- contributing to the roll-out of individual personal development tools in under-18 YOIs.

Key action 21

Support YOTs to develop effective engagement with police and crime commissioners and the police forces across England and Wales.

Key action 22

Review the YJB's *Case Management Guidance* to take into account recent changes in National Standards, secure placement procedures and the implementation of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012.

Key action 23

Work with the sector to identify and disseminate effective practice in the following practice areas:

- gangs and serious youth violence;
- girls and sexual exploitation;
- preventing violent extremism;
- appropriate adult services; and,
- anti-social behaviour.

To support this work, we will work with the Home Office and the Welsh Government to align strategic objectives and advise on the development of these policy areas across England and Wales.

Key action 24

Deliver the YJB's safeguarding and public protection priorities, focusing on:

- responding to deaths in custody by providing appropriate input/support to investigations and inquests, and ensuring that recommendations and learning are understood and responded to appropriately;
- the development of effective relationships between chairs of local safeguarding children boards and the youth justice system to identify effective practice to safeguard young people in the youth justice system; and,

- the development of the YJB's understanding and communication of effective practice around MAPPA and public protection.

Key action 25

Review the delivery of evidenced-based interventions in the youth justice system, including:

- supporting the development and expansion of the evidence base in relation to youth justice delivery;
- reviewing the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) model to consider the strengths and deficiencies of the model; and,
- reviewing the sustainability and strategic future of Intensive Fostering (including widening access to Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care beds across England and Wales).

Key action 26

Work with key partners to develop a strategy to reduce the over-representation of specific groups of young people in the youth justice system. This will include work focusing on looked-after children, and Black and Minority Ethnic young people in the youth justice system.

Key action 27

Continue to promote restorative justice approaches across the system, working in partnership with the MoJ and NOMS, with a focus on development of practice in the secure estate.

Key action 28

Commission research programmes that will review head-hold restraint techniques and non-pain compliance restraint methods.

Key action 29

Engage with YOTs to increase the use of Connectivity and improve the quality of documentation received to inform the placement of young people in custody.

Key action 30

Establish an operating model to achieve increased participation of young people in shaping the work of the YJB.

Key action 31

Define the YJB's future role and activity relating to prevention and early intervention, taking into account changes in the landscape such as differences in funding and the role of police and crime commissioners.

Promoting a youth justice system that successfully resettles young people into their communities

This priority reflects the drive for a reinvigoration of the ‘rehabilitation revolution’, with a renewed focus on better outcomes in the youth justice system.

The lessons learnt through evaluation of the YJB resettlement programme, including the resettlement consortia, together with our research over the past few years, will be used to promote the benefits of effective resettlement at the point of release from custody and at the end of community sentences.

Key action 32

Implement the transitions framework, including providing support for the roll-out of the NOMS custody protocol and the Y2A (youth to adult) portal, and effective practice dissemination to support practice improvement.

Key action 33

Work with the sector to identify and disseminate effective practice in relation to the following practice areas:

- access to appropriate accommodation for young people in the youth justice system; and,
- involvement of the youth justice system in the Troubled Families initiative (England only).

To support this work, we will work with the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Welsh Government to align strategic objectives and advise on the development of this policy area across England and Wales.

Key action 34

Work with the sector to identify and disseminate effective practice in relation to maximising employment opportunities for young people in the youth justice system.

To support this work, we will work with the Department of Work and Pensions, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Welsh Government to align strategic objectives and advise on the development of this policy area across England and Wales.

We will introduce an apprenticeship scheme at the YJB to support the employment of ex-offenders.

Key action 35

Work with the sector to identify and disseminate effective practice in the following practice areas:

- looked-after children in the youth justice system;
- the impact of wider education reforms on youth justice;
- the future of social worker provision in under-18 YOIs; and,

- improving practice concerning speech, language and communication needs.

To support this work, we will work with the Department for Education and the Welsh Government to align strategic objectives and advise on the development of these policy areas across England and Wales.

Key action 36⁵

Work in partnership with the Department of Health and offender health commissioners to align strategic objectives relating to youth justice, advise on the development of policy areas impacting on youth justice, identify and disseminate effective practice, and support the NHS commissioning of offender health services. This will include:

- developing a clear interface between the new health commissioning landscape and the youth justice system (both at a national and local level);
- delivery of the Liaison and Diversion Programme;
- improving practice concerning child development and psychology (e.g. applying attachment and trauma theory);
- improving practice concerning speech, language and communication needs;
- supporting health needs assessments for each secure establishment;
- transitioning the contract for the provision of services to young people who sexually abuse to the Department of Health; and,
- providing support for other health projects that affect the secure estate, such as the implementation of CHAT (Commissioning Health Assessment Tool) and the development of healthcare standards for children and young people in secure settings.

⁵ See also key action W8 (page 30).

Youth justice in Wales

The devolution of children's services, education, health and other policies to the Welsh Government has a significant impact on how youth justice services in Wales operate.

In recognition of this, we have reached a formal working agreement with the Welsh Government, which includes provision for:

- a joint youth justice strategy and delivery plan for Wales;
- collaborative monitoring of youth justice outcome information;
- joint governance and oversight of youth justice delivery;
- exchange of relevant information;
- collaboration in pursuit of effective and innovative practice;
- jointly appointed and funded staff; and,
- reciprocal advice on the interface between devolved and non-devolved policy.

The Welsh Government also provides significant funding for local youth crime prevention and funds the YJB to deliver a number of the elements in this plan; in particular, work to improve resettlement and progression from sentence.

The Welsh Government has recently consulted on whether it needs legislation to strengthen the support that devolved services give to the youth justice system. During 2012/13, we provided significant support and advice in the preparation of this consultation. We will continue this joint work during 2013/14 to publish a YJB/Welsh Government youth justice strategy and review our existing joint youth justice outcome indicators.

Our core activities in Wales

As the YJB's division in Wales, YJB Cymru delivers a number of our business as usual functions, described in pages 18–20 above, in a way that is tailored to the devolved context.

Working with devolved government and national stakeholders in Wales

Joint governance of youth justice is assisted by the Wales Youth Justice Advisory Panel, which advises the Welsh Government and the YJB on the implementation of policy to prevent offending by children and young people in Wales.

The Advisory Panel is jointly chaired by the YJB's Board member for Wales and the Welsh Government's Deputy Director for Community Safety. Its membership is drawn from our key stakeholder groups in Wales, with whom we will work on our 2013/14 priorities. These include:

- the Association of Chief Police Officers Cymru;
- the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru;
- the Wales Probation Trust;
- the Association of Directors of Education in Wales;
- the Welsh Local Government Association;
- the Welsh Centre for Crime and Social Justice;
- court services and sentencers in Wales;
- the voluntary and community sector; and,
- YOT Managers Cymru.

Oversight and support for youth justice services in Wales

We will continue to oversee and support community youth justice services in Wales and lead youth justice system developments specific to the devolved context. This includes co-ordinated work with the Welsh Government to oversee devolved elements of delivery, and work with the YJB's Secure Division to assist in the oversight of devolved elements of service delivery in the secure estate in Wales.

Effective practice in Wales

Working closely with our Effective Practice Division, YJB Cymru will continue to co-ordinate systems for the promotion of effective youth justice practice specific to the devolved context, to lead the effective practice development programme in Wales, and to support youth justice innovation specific to Wales. This includes working with the youth justice sector, the academic community and the Welsh Government to convene a Practice Development Panel to help develop and disseminate effective practice in Wales.

Key actions in Wales supporting our 2013/14 priorities

While the majority of the YJB actions detailed so far in this plan apply to both England and Wales, our YJB Cymru Division – working with the Wales Youth Justice Advisory Panel – has developed a distinct set of actions for Wales. Some have been identified as being of particular relevance to the devolved context. A number align with key actions in the preceding pages where these apply to devolved services, but the majority are based on our work last year to analyse the characteristics and needs of young people from Wales with prolific offending histories.

Reforming the secure estate for children and young people

Key action W1

Work with the Welsh Government to ensure that the UK Government's plans to reform the secure estate for children and young people take account of the needs of children and young people from Wales.

Driving improved cost-effectiveness across the youth justice system

Key action W2

Develop practice in delivering effective and value-for-money youth justice services via a reduced number of courts and, therefore, across larger geographical areas.

Key action W3

Improve information and data sharing across the youth justice system in Wales.

Key action W4

Work jointly with the Welsh Government to review our existing joint youth justice outcome indicators.

Targeted work to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes in the youth justice system

Key action W5

Develop effective case management practice to understand and address the complex needs of young people with prolific offending histories.

Key action W6

Improve joint working between youth justice and probation services in Wales:

- improving practice around transitions from the youth to adult justice systems;
- promoting effective work between youth justice services and integrated offender management; and,
- developing stronger links between work with the children and families of adult offenders and prevention services in Wales.

Key action W7

Develop joint YJB Cymru/Welsh Government guidance for dealing with speech, language and communication needs in the Welsh youth justice system.

Key action W8

Work with the Welsh Government to improve access to health services for children and young people in the youth justice system.

Key action W9

Work jointly with the Welsh Government to publish a YJB/Welsh Government youth justice strategy.

Promoting a youth justice system that successfully resettles young people into their communities

Key action W10

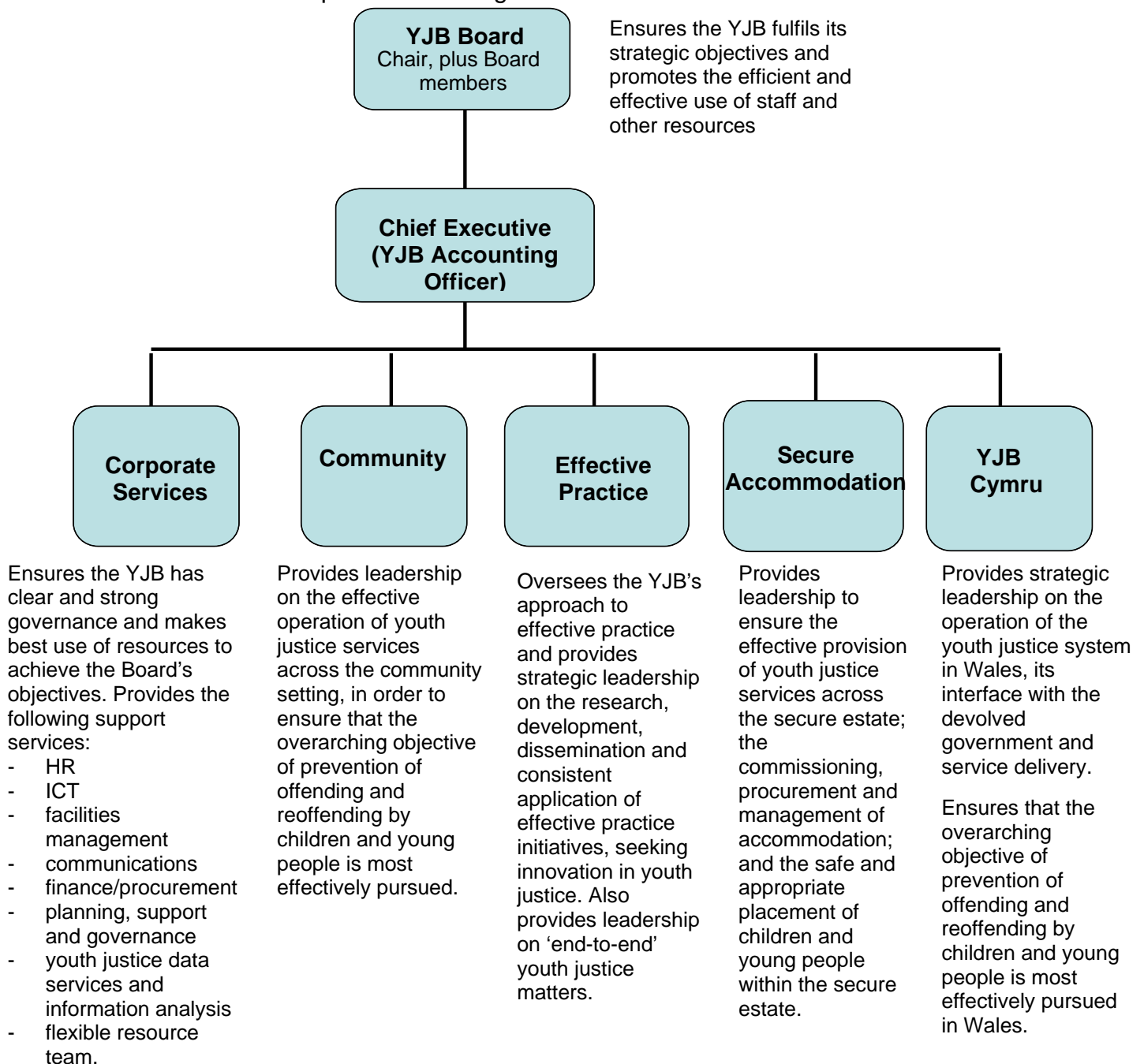
Continue to deliver the joint YJB/Welsh Government resettlement programme:

- supporting a South Wales resettlement consortium;
- delivering a North Wales resettlement broker project; and,
- supporting national, regional and local delivery of successful progression from community and custodial youth justice sentences.

Resources and budget allocation 2013/14

Our organisation

As at February 2013, the YJB had 221 full-time equivalent staff in place. In 2012, the YJB implemented a new organisational design and new processes for how we operate. This was designed to help the YJB to reduce running costs by one-third, against the 2010/11 baseline budget and also to support a greater focus on effective practice. The high-level structure is shown below.



Budget allocation for 2013/14

Our budget and resources are used to maintain and improve youth justice services. The YJB is solely funded by the Ministry of Justice following the transfer of the Home Office prevention funding from the YJB to police and crime commissioners. The YJB is also funded through the income from local authorities to recover the costs for the accommodation of remanded young people in custody.

Table 1: Resource budget allocation for 2013/14

Area of spend	2013/14 £m	Purpose of funding
Community youth justice services		
Grants	92	Youth Justice Good Practice Grants to all YOTs to support delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the three youth crime and justice outcomes (reducing first-time entrants, reducing reoffending, and reducing the unnecessary use of custody) indicators 4–6 in the Wales Youth Justice Indicator Set
Intensive Fostering	2	Intensive Fostering grant
Total	94	
Custodial services		
HM Prison Service under-18 YOIs	88	Secure accommodation in HM Prison Service under-18 YOIs
Private under-18 YOIs	33	Secure accommodation in private under-18 YOIs
Secure training centres	53	Secure accommodation in secure training centres
Secure children's homes	35	Secure accommodation in secure children's homes
Secure escort contracts	9	Transport for young people to and within the secure estate, e.g. from court to custody

Area of spend	2013/14 £m	Purpose of funding
Other custodial initiatives	5	Advocacy, secure workforce development, assisted visits, inspection programmes, restraint review, custody pathfinder
Less decommissioning savings	(15)	Anticipated savings generated through reductions in demand for custody
Less recovery of remand costs from local authorities	(11)	Implementation of changes in response to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012
Total custodial services	197	
Other areas of expenditure		
Operating costs	14	Staff and administrative costs
Youth justice system ICT support	4	Support and maintenance of youth justice ICT systems: Connectivity, eAsset, and the Youth Justice Management Information System (YJMIS)
Programme support	2	Includes implementation and support for effective practice programmes, AssetPlus, and Y2A (youth to adult change programmes)
Total fiscal resource (cash) budget	311	

Planning assumptions and managing risks

Planning assumptions

For some young people who have offended, custody is the most appropriate option. However, some young people are sent to custody when their needs could be better addressed, and their punishment better achieved, in the community. Our key planning assumptions are that:

- the custodial population continues to decrease; and,
- new government policies and actions by the YJB will further reduce inappropriate use of custody.

Decommissioning spare capacity in the secure estate contributes to the delivery of Spending Review savings. To achieve the savings, there must be continued significant falls in the demand for custody, both as a result of improvement in youth justice outcomes and through policies aimed at reducing inappropriate use of custody (for example, when a community sentence would be more effective), or through improved approaches to the use of remand.

There have been encouraging signs of progress across the youth justice system in recent years. During 2011/12, there was an average of 1,963 young people under the age of 18 in custody at any one time, a decrease of 77 young people from the 2010/11 average of 2,040. There have been further decreases during 2012/13.

The YJB reviews its commissioning decisions regularly and bases its decisions on a range of existing management information to ensure supply meets demand. It is important to obtain a significant degree of assurance that any planned reductions in commissioned beds are sustainable over the medium to long term.

Managing risks and opportunities

The YJB faces both challenges and opportunities in preventing offending and reoffending by children and young people, and in providing secure accommodation. Meeting these challenges requires innovative thinking and new approaches, while continuing to meet rigorous standards of accountability and governance. Managing uncertainty – risk – in an informed and intelligent way is critical if we are to achieve outcomes, constrain threats to acceptable levels and take informed decisions to exploit opportunities.

Using the experience we have gained since the YJB was established, we have built risk management into the way the YJB operates – in our approach to contract and monitoring arrangements for the secure estate and in the support we provide to YOTs.

Our planning process has been informed by our assessment of risks to the delivery of our corporate objectives and projects, as well as the changing landscape within which youth justice operates.

Our planning process has highlighted a number of risks that have informed the development of our plan; these risks and appropriate mitigating measures will be developed and monitored through our risk management approach. These risks include:

- the changing local landscapes of health commissioning, education and social welfare reform;
- the ability of the youth justice system to keep up with progress in ICT infrastructure to shape the joining up of services across the system;
- a continued increase in reoffending rates undermining public confidence and perceptions of young people in the system; and,
- the risk that the rate of reform, coupled with an overly rapid decommissioning approach to deliver savings, could destabilise the achievements of the system.

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