Recommendations

a. Note the actions completed to achieve MTFS savings
b. Understand the reasons for the review of YOS
c. Agree the actions required to monitor the changes to the service

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

1. In order to deliver the best outcomes for vulnerable children, young people, families, victims and communities, the Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Families & Communities in June 2017, which proposed to review the SYOS to reflect the changing landscape of the Youth Justice System and to reflect the decreasing caseloads.

2. The Safe and Strong Select Committee requested that a report be tabled following the review which outlined:
   a. the reasons for the review
   b. review outcomes
   c. timescale for actions recommended by the review
   d. how the changes to this service would be monitored

3. This report outlines the background to the review, progress to date and monitoring processes post full implementation and the Committee is asked to note progress and agree actions for monitoring the changes.

Report

Background

4. The Youth Justice System was established by Section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), in order to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people aged 10 -17 years. The Crime and Disorder Act dictated that the Youth Justice System would be delivered and managed locally through Youth Offending Services, a multi-agency partnership with statutory representation from local authorities (specifically Social Care and Education), the Police, Probation and Health. SYOS was therefore established as a statutory function of the Crime and Disorder Act. In addition, by providing the Youth Justice Services outlined in Section 38 (4) of the Act, the local
authority also addresses its duty, under paragraph 7(b) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989, to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young people within the area not to commit offences.

5. This legislation led to a model of delivery which brings together a range of agencies with expertise in welfare and enforcement practices to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people, families, victims and communities. A model which has successfully developed in Staffordshire, which was reflected in the last Full Joint Inspection of SYOS.

6. SYOS will retain an established Prevention service which works directly with children at risk of committing crime. This service is closely aligned to the Early Help model and works with individuals and schools to prevent children entering the criminal justice system. The YOS also offers a process for working with children who are charged with a lower level offence to keep them out of the formal court processes known as Triage. Triage offers a holistic tailored package of support for the child and family to keep them out of the formal criminal justice system. For children sentenced in the formal criminal justice process SYOS provides a full court service to youth and crown courts with the provision of reports to advise on sentencing and then will work with these children upon sentence to offer an intervention with their families to reduce the risks of re-offending and ensure compliance with court requirements.

7. The accountable body for the YOS is the statutory Management Board. Staffordshire has a well-established Management Board which is accountable for providing strategic direction to the service.

8. SCC took the decision to make savings to Staffordshire Youth Offending Service on the basis that the overall number of children and young people in the Youth Justice System continued to reduce as evidenced in data monitored over a significant period. This reduction is in line with national trends.

9. As part of commitments made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, SCC contribution to Staffordshire Youth Offending Service reduced by £300,000 (2017/18) and a further £100,000 (2018/19). This is in addition to a £100,000 reduction in 2016/17. This totals an annual saving of £500,000 for SCC between 2016 and 2019. This commitment was approved as part of the MTFS approval process in February 2017.

10. Cabinet approved proposals to review Staffordshire Youth Offending Service in respect of the decreasing caseloads and in order to identify a saving of £500,000, as outlined in the SCC Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Cabinet agreed to delegate key decisions in relation to the review of Staffordshire Youth Offending Service to County Councillor Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.

11. Formal consultation with Unions commenced on the 25th July 2018 which detailed a reduction in staffing to reflect the decrease in demand. Following a full 45-day consultation and reviewing feedback received from partners, staff and unions amendments were made to the structure which achieved the savings and ensured that there were adequate resources available to the meet the needs of children, families and communities.

12. All Job descriptions have been reviewed and evaluated to ensure that they meet the needs of our children, families and communities.
13. The County Manager (SYOS) will lead a management team which will include two Operations Managers (Youth Justice), one Operations Manager (Youth Justice Prevention & Early Intervention) and one Operations Manager (Effective Practice & Community Development). This new structure has removed a layer of management and reduced the overall number of management posts.

14. The revised structure includes Senior Practitioners (Youth Justice), Social Workers (Youth Justice) and Practitioners (Youth Justice) who will continue to perform the same roles and responsibilities following a small number of changes to the Job Descriptions & Person Specifications. The number of Social Worker posts have been retained reflecting the complexity of the children and there has been a reduction in Practitioner posts and Senior Practitioner posts.

15. To ensure that the Youth Justice System can focus on the “root cause” of offending and improve the short, medium and long-term outcomes of vulnerable children, young people, families, victims and communities, the service will maintain two redesigned Education Training and Employment posts.

16. The service will continue to be supported by seconded staff from statutory partners, including Nurses, Police Officers, Victim Liaison Officers and a Probation Officer. A Health Needs Assessment was developed by the County Manager and as an outcome, the County Manager has worked with statutory partners and commissioners to review the Health Provision across SYOS and it is believed that this now matches the needs of the children.

17. The Administration Support has been redesigned to reflect the changes in the wider service and the posts included in the Administration function will be transferred to the Families First Resources & Business Support Portfolio as part of the wider Partnership & Development Service. This will ensure that SYOS is consistent with all other areas of Families First where administration functions form part of a specialist service led by the Families First County Manager: Resources & Business Support. The redesigned administration posts and structure will be consistent with the wider Families First Service.

18. “Smart Working” practices across Staffordshire Youth Offending Service will include the opportunity for Managers and Practitioners to work remotely from “agile” locations including SCC Touchdown Centre’s, buildings operated by our partners and other available community touchdown points. “Smart Working” and the redesigned model will seek to enhance the opportunities to colleagues across the service.

19. Following the consultation and a revised structure being agreed HR processes including recruitment and placing have taken place. Consistent with the timescales there are several staff that are currently being supported with redeployment. As the service had been awaiting the review there were vacancies within the structure due to staff exiting the service which has meant that all the Practitioners and the Social Workers were able to be placed in post, and some staff have the skills to fulfill other posts in the new structure. The new structure is due to go live on the 15th March 2019 which is the original date agreed at the commencement of consultation.

20. The review has been led by the County Manager for YOS and overseen by the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Service reporting into the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities. The Lead
Councillor Mark Sutton has been provided with regular updates and agreed the final structure. The Youth Offending Service Management Board has also scrutinised the final structure as they are required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 section 38 to ensure that the service has adequate resources to prevent offending.

21. The Youth Offending Service Management Board are required to monitor the effectiveness of the service and receive quarterly performance reports during their scheduled Management Board meetings. The Board will continue to monitor the changes made following full implementation of the changes.

22. All posts have been redesigned with new Job Descriptions and there is a requirement to ensure that all these posts are reviewed within six months of implementation to ensure they are correct. Therefore, all the new Job Descriptions will be reviewed in September 2019.

23. **Link to Strategic Plan:**

   a. Ensure Children and Families have a network of support to help manage their own problems and stay safe and well

   b. Our digital programme will make greater use of technology and data to work in more modern, effective and lower cost ways

   c. A joined-up approach to Health, Care and Wellness that encourages people to take responsibility for their own health and plan for their future, so that we can support those who really need it.

   d. Improve Education and Skills provision in our schools, colleges and universities so that more people gain the training and qualifications they need to succeed

   e. Work with and through our networks of public, private and community organisations to achieve our ambitions.

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**List of Appendices:**

**Appendix A** – Staffordshire Youth Offending Service Previous Operational Structure  
**Appendix B** – Staffordshire Youth Offending Service New Structure  
**Community Impact Assessment**

**List of Background Papers:**

County Council Staffing Protocol (HR 92)  