Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People said,

“We are incredibly proud of our Youth Offending Service and the work that our staff do to help young people turn their lives around.

“In June 2016, HM Chief Inspector of Probation recognised ours as one of the most effective Youth Just Services in England and Wales, by awarding it 22 stars out of a potential 24 following an inspection.

“As a reflection of the success the figures have fallen by over a third over the past three years. So we now need to look at how we can best shape the service to best meet Staffordshire’s changing needs.”

Report Summary:

This report is to seek the approval of Cabinet in respect to our proposals to review SYOS (Staffordshire Youth Offending Service), which includes a full review of the current SYOS delivery model.

Recommendations

a. Cabinet acknowledges the exceptional performance of SYOS, as highlighted in a recent report published by HM Chief Inspector of Probation.

b. Cabinet notes that the number of children and young people supervised by SYOS has decreased over the last three years.

c. Cabinet acknowledges the need to review SYOS, in respect of the decreasing caseloads, and Cabinet grants permission to move forward to commence consultation with recognised Trade Unions.

d. Cabinet agrees to delegate key decisions in relation to the review of SYOS to Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.
Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:

a. Cabinet acknowledges the exceptional performance of SYOS, as highlighted in a recent report published by HM Chief Inspector of Probation.

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d. Cabinet agrees to delegate key decisions in relation to the review of SYOS to Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families & Communities

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background to the Staffordshire Youth Offending Service (SYOS):

1. 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.

2. 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 children, young people, families and communities. A model which has successfully developed in Staffordshire, which was reflected in the recent Full Joint Inspection of SYOS in 2016.

3. 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.
4. Within Families First, SYOS is an integral part of the Specialist Safeguarding Delivery Service, with the County Manager (SYOS) reporting directly to the Strategic Lead (Early Help & Specialist Safeguarding Delivery) who provides management accountability and oversight. The Head of Families First/Deputy Director of Children’s Services is the Chair of the SYOS Board and is line-managed by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Families & Communities, who reports directly to the County Council’s Chief Executive Officer. SYOS is a multi-disciplinary service which operates at level three and above of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board “Continuum of Need”.

5. SYOS is delivered in accordance with statutory legislation set out in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) and the updates received in the Criminal Justice Act (2003) and the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act (2013). The National Standards for Youth Justice Services are set out by the Secretary of State for Justice on the advice from the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB). The standards apply to those organisations providing statutory Youth Justice Services as outlined by the Crime and Disorder Act (1998). SYOS is required to provide the supervisory elements of statutory Youth Justice Services including:

a. Assessment of children and young people who have offended and management of risk and safeguarding issues.

b. Supervision of children and young people who have been remanded to custody and those requiring support in the community, as directed by the Court.

c. Provision of pre-court interventions that divert children and young people away from the Youth Justice System.

d. Statutory supervision of young people who have been given Court Orders which are to be managed in the community, including the provision of a lay youth panel to discharge the responsibilities of Referral Orders.

e. Sentence planning for young people in custody and their supervision on release and

f. Planning for reintegration beyond the end of a sentence.

Performance Management and Quality:

6. In June 2016, HM Chief Inspector of Probation published its final report in relation to the performance of SYOS, following the Full Joint Inspection (FJI) of SYOS. The report awarded SYOS 22 stars out of a potential 24 leading to SYOS being recognised as one of the most effective and well performing YOS services in England and Wales.

7. For several years, SYOS has also performed exceptionally well against national indicators. SYOS continues to improve the standards and quality of practice and is widely recognised at a local, regional and national level as an exceptionally well performing SYOS.

8. In 2015/2016 SYOS were required by the Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) to complete a Viewpoint Questionnaire with young people on statutory orders. The findings of these questionnaires are used to gather evidence for any
future HMIP inspection of SYOS. SYOS completed 65 questionnaires and the findings of these are very encouraging. The key findings are highlighted below:

a. 98% stated that SYOS fully explained their order at the start of the intervention.
b. 100% stated that they agreed with the referral order contract.
c. 90% stated that they have agreed to a supervision or sentence plan.
d. 81% stated that the work with SYOS had made them less likely to offend in the future.
e. 85% stated that they had been treated fairly by SYOS all / most of the time.
f. 98% stated that the service they had been given by SYOS was very good or good.
g. 92% stated that their YOT worker did enough to help them participate in their YOT work.

Decreasing Demand in Staffordshire:

9. The total number of young people that SYOS has worked with has decreased by 39% since 2012/2013, which is in line with the national picture. The majority of the reductions were seen in 2013/14 and the total has remained relatively stable over the last three years, as illustrated in the chart below:

![No. of Young People Supervised by YOS](chart)

10. At the end of December 2016, the area teams were collectively holding 147 cases, a decrease of 10 cases from last quarter. 64 cases have started in Q3. The North area team hold 41% of all cases (60), followed by the South West with 33% (48), and then the South East with 27% (39). 23% of all cases held by SYOS are Looked After Children (34), of these 20 have been placed by other local authorities. This outlined in the table below:
11. The below table outlines the current average caseloads across the service at December 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Caseholders</th>
<th>Average Caseload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS):**

12. SCC is able to propose savings to SYOS on the basis that the overall number of children and young people in the Youth Justice System has reduced significantly; this has remained low for the past three years and continues to reduce as evidenced in the most recent data.

13. As a result, Staffordshire County Council (SCC) contribution to SYOS will reduce by £300,000 by March 2018 and a further £100,000 by March 2019, whilst maintaining a quality and effective service. This is in addition to a £100,000 reduction already made in 2016/17. This would total an annual saving of £500,000 for SCC between 2016 and 2019. This was approved as part of the MTFS approval process in February 2017. The reduction in contribution would only impact on resources paid for by Staffordshire County Council.

**Initial Scoping:**

14. In Summer 2016, the Families First Strategic Lead: Early Help & Specialist Safeguarding Delivery commissioned an internal “desk top” exercise to support a potential review of SYOS.

15. In undertaking this “desk top” exercise, a range of information in relation to operational delivery, demand, efficiency, quality, performance, service scale, organisational structure, governance, integrated working, finance and sustainability were considered.
16. It is intended that the outcome of this initial scoping exercise will inform any potential review of SYOS, following the decision of Cabinet.

**SYOS End State:**

17. In order to deliver the best outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families, it is proposed to review the SYOS to reflect the changing landscape of the Youth Justice System and to reflect decreasing caseloads.

18. The revised SYOS Delivery Model will be reflective of the decreasing caseloads and will also deliver a saving of £500,000 over three years. This redesign will build on the work already undertaken and will ensure SCC is able to maximise its resources to support the most vulnerable residents in Staffordshire.

19. It is the intention of SCC to work closely with stakeholders, including staff, to ensure the revised SYOS Delivery Model is implemented in a way that best meets the needs of Staffordshire communities.

20. It is intended that the new delivery model will continue to ensure a high performing YOS which is focused on achieving improved outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families. The new delivery model will be responsive to the changing landscape of the Youth Justice System moving forward. The redesign will give a greater focus to prevention and early intervention in line with the principles of the Children’s Transformation Programme and the vision of the OPCC to reduce reoffending in Staffordshire.

21. It is intended that the redesign of SYOS will be overseen by Richard Hancock, Head of Families First and Deputy Director of Children’s Services, in consultation with County Councillor Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.

**Report Commissioner:** Richard Hancock  
**Job Title:** Head of Families First and Deputy Director of Children’s Services  
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