

CARDIFF COUNCIL

CHILD RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRIA)

Policy/ Strategy/ Project/ Procedure/ Service Title:	Building Safer Futures Together Strategy 2022/24
New/ Existing/ Updating/ Amending:	Updating All Our Futures 2020/22

Who is responsible for developing and implementing the policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service?	
Name:	Graham Robb and Natalie Holohan
Job Title:	Independent Chair and Senior Officer Planning & Interventions
Service/ Team:	Youth Justice Service
Directorate:	Children's Services
CRIA Completion Date:	December 2022

CRIA process

This document has been developed in workshops with colleagues from the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) and with Cardiff Council Child Friendly City team. In particular, we drew on guidance, tools and support offered by UNICEF UK to support the development of a rights-respecting youth justice service.

Both these groups have reviewed the final drafts and changes were incorporated in this draft.

Approval of this CRIA by the Cardiff Youth Justice Board will be followed by publication alongside the strategy.

STAGE 1: PURPOSE/ SCOPE

The Cardiff Youth Justice Service (YJS) is a partnership of Cardiff services including Children’s social care, Education, Health, Police and Probation. The youth. We cover work with communities to prevent young people coming into contact with the justice system, but if they do then we work at point of arrest, community order, court order, or if remanded or sentenced to custody and then on release.

What we know is that those harmed by children and young people are often other children and young people and without help some of those may go onto cause harm to others. So we support work to help young people feel safe and supported.

The Strategy is written for professionals and is an overall statement of what we aim to achieve together. Detail of actions are in the annual Youth Justice Plan.

NB By law every young person up to age 18 is protected by having the status of ‘child’ . In this document we will use that term child but in routine work we know we are working with young people on their adolescent development journey.

1. What is the policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service?

Summarise/ describe its overall aims and any aims specific to children.

Youth Justice Services are statutory, aimed at children aged 10 years up to age 18, in contact with or on the periphery of the justice system. We are a multi-agency staff group including Police, Social Work, Youth Work, Health, Education and Probation so align our work across all services.

Youth Justice Services are Inspected by HMIP Probation. This happened in 2020 when an overall judgement of “Inadequate” was made. A Revisit in spring 2022 noted significant improvement and an overall judgement of “Requires Improvement” was reached. The Action plan arising from that inspection informed this strategy and CRIA.

What are we trying to achieve?

Our goal is the prevention of offending by children by a focus on:

- Reducing first time entrants to the Youth Justice system
- Reducing re-offending by children
- Minimising use of custody for children

Cardiff YJS at any one time is working with about 130 children and young people . For some young people contact with the YJS is short because that is all that is needed to help a child sort out problems and get the help needed to succeed. But we also recognise the experience of arrest and other contact with youth justice processes could have a negative impact unless we make those as ‘child friendly’ as possible. For some young

people contact is longer : for example supervising of court order can last up to 12 months, a small number are supervised for longer periods including in custody and resettling into the community after prison sentence.

This strategy “ Building Safer Futures Together” for 2022-2024 describes the overall development themes. Each year an annual Youth justice Plan sets out the detailed service level improvements. These two documents inform each other. For the 2022-24 the core elements of the strategy are as follows:

Our Vision Statement *The highest aspirations for the children, supported by the right team doing the right work*

The evidence is clear that giving young people positive opportunities in their life is a key contributor in preventing future crime and harm to others as well as improving wellbeing and self-esteem. We are committed to a rights-based approach because that has been proven to be key in achieving positive outcomes when working with young people.

Our purpose.

- a) *As a Youth Justice Service, we work with adolescents in contact with the justice system and with those harmed by crime to reduce children coming into YJ system; reduce reoffending and minimise use of custody*
- b) *We must hear the voice and work with the child to help them achieve better outcomes and avoid unnecessary criminalisation*
- c) *As a Partnership we work with wider universal and specialist services to achieve shared goals of prevention, reducing offending and minimise harm later in life.*
- d) *As partner services we hear and work with the children and families to help them see different decisions, choices, and options.*
- e) *To help children develop positive identity, know about better choices /different decisions, through relationship-based practice supporting access to achievement, wellbeing and sense of safety and hope.*
- f) *To help families , communities and partners in Cardiff have confidence in partnership services*
- g) *Develop and use an evidence base for why we take actions – by assessing the impact on each child*

Our principles

1. *We work with children and adolescents- we know about adolescent development*
2. *We work with families and careers – we will hear and work with them to support positive family dynamics*
3. *We build trusted relationships by Trauma Informed and Restorative practice and by building on the strengths of the child and their context*

4. *We will identify and understand the children's vulnerabilities and share how to manage them especially at the points of crisis which offer teachable moments.*
5. *We will build a Child Rights based approach – based on*
 - *a focus on actions to make the child feel safe*
 - *respect for the Dignity of each child ,*
 - *working to support all the needs of the child*
 - *always working in the best interests of the child ,*
 - *participation which means ensuring at all stages we work with the child and hear what their views are ,*
 - *making sure our work is all about individual needs and is not discriminatory on the basis of ethnicity, gender/orientation or other characteristic,*
 - *being transparent (open) about how we are doing and what we are doing*
6. *We will work firstly to safeguard the child including look at the context in which they live – family, community, school . We will balance this with actions to protect other people.*
7. *We are a multi agency service, working always in partnership including with universal services*

“ Building Safer Futures Together “ has four core commitments . In this section we explain what that will mean for the children we work with.

Commitment 1 WORKING WITH CHILDREN FAMILIES AND PARTNERS

We know (because we asked them) that children want to work with someone who listens to them , takes the time to get to know them, helps them understand what is going on and works with families and other services (such as health, education or social care) and justice partners (such as Police, Community panels , Courts and Probation) to get the best possible outcomes. This means building relationships and working to have language and approaches which enable children and families to understand and engage positively.

Commitment 2 SYSTEM analysis and CHANGE

Our focus is with each child but we also know there are some barriers to progress which are about the ways in which structures in society or in the youth justice system work. The role of us as Leaders of the Cardiff Youth Justice Services is to use data and the lived experience of children and families, to identify any such barriers and work to take them down. As needed, we can take these issues to the most senior people in Cardiff to help resolve.

Commitment 3 Better Choices; Safer Places

The children sometimes are not aware or do not accept , because of their life experience , that they do actually have choices and that those choices can give them hope, confidence and respect. Our role is in part to assure them to support their ability to understand and make positive choices. Sometimes it is a hard message to hear and for others to recognise. There are also some key locations and events in a child's life including in contact with the youth justice system where by making a place feel safer the child can engage and see possibilities for change. That is something we will work to provide across our partners

In summary we know that the best way to work with children and families is by understanding that they may well have experienced trauma and until that is addressed we cannot achieve other progress . We also know that resolving conflict or harm using restorative processes is a very effective route to helping all those affected move on from a crisis point – including those who have experienced the harm caused by children.

Commitment 4. Making it happen : Governance and leadership

The Leaders of Cardiff Youth Justice (See the partners listed in section 1) make up the Youth Justice Board which is responsible to the Cardiff Chief Executive for providing the Youth Justice Services(YJS) in Cardiff. We are held to account for performance to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (Ministry of Justice)

Youth Justice services are Inspected by specialists in Police, Social Care and Health) and the most recent Inspection (Published August 2022 informed the strategy . The report is at [Cardiff-YJS-inspection-report.pdf](#) . The Cover note summarised it as :

Cardiff YJS is making progress and have made considerable efforts to address the issues we found in 2020. They are now better equipped, in key areas, to deal with the needs of children under their supervision, improve their lives, and protect the local community. While a rating of 'Requires improvement' means they still have some way to go, Cardiff YJS is showing signs that they can, and will, continue to develop.

There have also been improvements to services for YJS children, with better joint working across many of the key statutory agencies and organisations. This has resulted in good quality work within out-of-court disposal cases and resettlement

2. Will the policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service affect children and young people?

3. Please think about which groups of children and young people it will affect.

This strategy will inform work of the partners in Cardiff with children to prevent them coming into the justice system ; and

- in engagement with Children after point of arrest and at police custody as well as those who have experienced harm

- Supporting Children through out of court and court processes, including bail support packages
- Our work processes including assessment of Children and gathering information, will also support how to comply with court orders
- Offers of opportunities and processes
- Managing transitions from YJS to more universal services or onto post 18 justice services

The Children :

As a snapshot in March 2022 134 children were working with the YJS . Nearly 9 out of ten were male and 8 out of 10 were white . Most were aged 15-17 . That makes it even more important that we plan to get the right services for girls, for younger children and for those from different ethnicities.

Some examples of the needs of the children which partners are working to meet

45% of the children at Key Stage 4 have identified learning needs

83 are children with a care and support plan, **16** have CP plan and **36** Children Looked After

Because of work we did last year we are now working also to identify and provide services for

Those with Speech language and Communication needs

Those with mental health needs

Those not in mainstream school or not in Education Training or employment

The top 3 offences for which children were arrested :

1. Violence against the person, 2. Theft and handling stolen goods and 3. Motoring offences

The key risks to children which we want to focus on :

Serious Youth Violence – often arising from the way in which adults exploit young people.

Disproportionality – which means that there is evidence that there are more children from some groups than there should be – for example that might be about ethnicity or about if they are looked after. We have the data to show this – now we can start challenging the systems or behaviours which may result in this pattern .

Tracking the changing risks in children’s lives . Some of the effect of the pandemic will affect children and families for some time but also we must watch for changes arising from national changes which might make things better.....or worse.. for children – household money, changes in the laws.

STAGE 2: BUILD AND ASSESS

4. The General Principles of the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) are at the heart of a child rights-based approach, and are enshrined in articles 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention. Please set out how your policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service has taken account of these.

Cardiff YJ services aspire to align with the principles applying to all children in Cardiff. There are some specific articles and principles which require specific response from the YJ services.

Article and Child Rights approach : 7 Principles	What does this mean for Cardiff Youth Justice services?	Where is this in the strategy?	Indicators
Article 40 Every child alleged as, accused of, or recognised as having infringed criminal law should always be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child’s sense of dignity and worth.	Approaches to engagement, assessment, analysis for out of court or court processes and interventions which respond to the individual needs of the child (*as defined by law up to age 18) in ways which recognise the trauma experienced.	Purpose and Principles p11 and Rights based work p 12-14	More Children will tell us that they feel their individual needs and hopes are helped during their work with the young justice service
Article 5 introduces the concept of a child’s ‘evolving capacities’	All work should be age - and development stage - appropriate for the individual in their context - minimising adultification of service responses.	Commitment 1 Working with Child and family-based practice	Leaders will be able to show that youth justice services are right for the age and family situation of children
<i>Principle (non-discrimination):</i>	A community and set of services and systems for children, families, communities where the ethnic, cultural heritage of children is not a factor in disproportionately influencing the actions or outcomes taken by youth justice services in their lives. We also recognise that disproportional representation in the youth justice system might be evident for example in	Commitment 2 SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND CHANGE Disproportionality and diversity P 20	Leaders will be able to show that the barriers and structures which may lead to over representation of children in the youth justice system is reducing. The Cardiff Youth Justice Board has adapted a strategy developed from national best practice on supporting

	Children looked after or in other of the protected characteristics As statutory Board members we commit to supporting the disproportionality work of the YJS AND to working to align our services with these disproportionality commitments.		children from black and minority ethnic heritage.
<i>Principle (best interests of the child):</i>	The Framework of practice to be developed is predicated on the primacy of the 'best interests'.	Purpose and Principles and Commitment 1 "working with..." Practice Framework p 16	Service leaders will have evidence that service decisions are evidently based on the 'best interests' of the child
<i>Principle (life, survival and development):</i>	The Cardiff SAFE Framework promotes partnership actions to promote personal safety and safer places	Commitment 2 SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND CHANGE SAFE Framework P 19 Commitment 3 Safer placesP24	Children will tell us , including those harmed, that they feel safer .
<i>Principle (respect for the views of the child):</i>	The Framework of practice to be developed is predicated on the principle of respect for the views of the child	Commitment 1 "working with..." Practice Framework p 16	Children will tell us that they feel they are heard at all stages of their contact with the youth justice system
<i>Principle(Participation)</i>	The development of the Participation strategy , informed by the Equal partners training will define structure and processes to support evident participation	Purposes and principles	Children report directly, and data shows leaders, that participation is fully built into the culture of the service.
<i>Principle (Dignity)</i>	This will be embedded in the Framework of practice.	Commitment 1 "working with..." Practice Framework p 16	Children tell us that they feel they are respected and that staff actively listen and support them.
<i>Principle (Interdependence and indivisibility)</i>	The common assessment framework for Youth Justice is a holistic approach. Training, supervision and monitoring will ensure this is delivered for all children	Commitment 1 Working with P 16 Supporting transitions Commitment 3 Safer places p 24	Children and families report that from engagement through assessment and then to action, the needs of the child are identified and action taken to meet those needs
<i>Principle (Transparency and accountability)</i>	Governance through Children's services, Cardiff YJ Board and the Public services Board will monitor evaluate and report on progress in achieving these principles	Commitment 4 Making it happen P 25	YJ Leaders will report progress on the rights-based work to the right Boards in Cardiff and make public progress made as part of the routine review of the strategy

You should refer to the [full list of UNCRC Articles](#) when completing this form and add any other relevant articles above. For further information or assistance on UNCRC Articles, please email the Child Friendly Cardiff Team ChildFriendlyCardiff@cardiff.gov.uk

5. What is the likely/ actual impact of the proposal on children’s rights? Is it positive, negative or neutral?

Cardiff YJ Board is committed to achieving better outcomes for children and that this will be achieved by this Children’s rights approach not only in the YJ service but in work with the statutory and other partners including community groups.

We recognise this will not be easy . The strategy p14 references the workshop in spring 2022 which recognised some of the challenges that this will present. These will be addressed in the current work on quality assurance and statements of youth justice service practice.

There may be a tension between the desirable goal of ‘informed consent’ by children and the legal processes and timescales required

How we can assess that the ‘best interest’ test is being applied in ways which also reflect the developmental stages of children

How these commitments can be shared across services and communicated effectively to children, carers and parents at what may well be a time of crisis.

How to build on the restorative and trauma informed awareness in the service

How to model how we ‘co produce’ work with the children and families

How management and Governance systems can reflect, reinforce and evaluate how the seven principles for the Rights based approach are being applied.

We also recognise the risk of labelling young people as part of a Youth Justice cohort, and within the constraints of the justice system will strive to maintain anonymity. However we also need to find ways to communicate with communities which gives reassurance about the way YJ partners work with children across a range of reported crime types from anti-social behaviour to the highest gravity offences.

All aspects of the YJ strategy aim to be positive contributors to children’s rights. Within the statutory confines of the Youth Justice legal framework we acknowledge some structural barriers identified in the UNICEF reports on Children’s rights in England and Wales eg

Age of criminal responsibility

Equal access to diversionary opportunities

Some of these are evidently negative in relation to a children’s rights approach.

However, the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales requires that our services are ‘Child First, offender second’. Cardiff recognises this as key strategic pathway, and it informs the annual YJ plan.

The complexity of the multi-agency Youth Justice system means a specific challenge is in achieving consistent practice across the multiple agencies involved which in addition to the statutory partners includes Courts and Secure Estate. We will work with local partners in these services to increase the capacity for a child rights approach

A focus of the youth justice system is also on meeting the needs of those harmed by crime. Many of those are themselves children. We will work to build our restorative processes to include, where we can, those harmed by crime ..and we will also work with Victim’s organisations to understand and meet their needs based on the seven principles.

6. How will the service deliver, support, and promote children’s rights?

Delivery: The work in the YJ system has the support of the Chief Executive, Independent Chair , Board and Operational Manager.

- a) Through explicit statement about a Children’s Rights Approach in the strategy 22-24
- b) Through actions in the statutory YJ Plan 22-23 and 23-24 and workplans to deliver measurable outcomes
- c) Through the work of the management team
- d) Through staff and partners training – equal partners and service design
- e) Through systems which check the quality of work done.

STAGE 3: VOICE AND EVIDENCE

7. Evidence

8. Have you sourced and included the views and experiences of children and young people? What do you know about children and young people’s views and experiences that are relevant to the proposal?

The direct quotes from children in the strategy were gathered at 1:1 sessions and small workshops in spring 2022. They told us that the challenges to building trust are significant , that earlier work with children is the priority, that building a trusting relationship with the individual worker is key to helping them , and their families, understand what is happening to them.

We know that there is much to do to ensure that the views of the child are evident in the records at individual level, at system level and in reaching strategic decisions.

Engagement work so far has included:

- **Building Relationships.** Case Managers work in a trauma informed way, this means they take the time to engage with and get to know the young people before they start work on the offence. For Cardiff YJS what is important is the individual, understanding them and their needs, not labelling them as a criminal.
- **YJS journey.** Throughout a young person's journey in the youth justice system, they are given the opportunity to tell their story, to contribute to and feedback on their intervention with their case manager. At every key point in their journey, the young people and their parents voices are heard and acted upon.
- **All Our Futures Strategy Consultation: Young People's voice.** A panel of 10 Young People across Cardiff YJS. 1:1 sessions and small group workshops to explore issues important to young people and how they felt Cardiff YJS can support them, what's working and what can be improved. Discussed how YJs can help you live a safer life, how YJs can support you to succeed in life. Discussed risks YP face and YPs participation throughout their journey.
- **Strategy Launch Event.** Panel of 5 Young People across Cardiff YJS. Small group workshops to plan, coordinate and co-facilitate the strategy launch event. YP creating a presentation of a typical Cardiff YP and their journey through YJ. YP planning an introduction to the launch event. YP creating an interactive quiz for attendees. YP deciding on discussion topics for breakout discussions, regarding issues that face young people in Cardiff and Children's Rights.
- **CRIA.** Panel of 3 Young People across Cardiff YJS. Small session to discuss how Cardiff YJS Strategy, staff and board can be held to account, focusing on Children's Rights.
- **Interactive Feedback.** Gather feedback from young people through Mind of my Own online questionnaire and Xchange app.
- **Conversations with Strategic Leaders.** A small group of 5 young people engaged in conversations with strategic leaders about topics that young people are passionate about. Young people discussed their experiences of mental health, education and youth justice, with key decision makers.
- **Councillors Scrutiny committee.** Four Young people attended scrutiny committee to give insight into their lives and how the youth justice services work with them
- **YJS Inspection April 22.** Young people's views were gathered by inspectors and referenced in the published report.

In the future Cardiff YJS will continue to ask, develop, and support young people's views

- a. Young people will be given the opportunity to provide feedback through creative means, including the Xchange App
- b. Young people will be given the opportunity to participate in task and finish groups on specific issues important to them

- c. Young people will be given the opportunity to reflect on their journey, following completion of an order
- d. Cardiff YJS will develop opportunities for young people to continue to engage with the service
- e. Cardiff YJS will develop a Participation Strategy with reporting loops for evaluation
- f. Staff and volunteers will have a clear and practical understanding of participation
- g. Management will support staff through supervisions and monitoring
- h. Management will review and monitor case file records, scrutiny, and QA processes
- i. Board will complete scrutiny of indicators and direct engagement

Cardiff YJS will engage with partners' children's rights work

- a. Corporate Parenting within Cardiff Council developing a Children's council
- b. Youth Justice Board Cymru, Youth Ambassadors Network YAN
- c. Health Board young people
- d. South Wales Police
- e. Secure Estate – Hillside and Parc inc assessing their resettlement work
- f. Youth Service/ Education surveys

9. How do you plan to review the policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service to ensure that it respects, protects and fulfils children's rights?

Please provide an outline of the monitoring and review process for the implementation of the strategy/ policy/ project/ procedure or delivery of the service and how children and young people will be included in this process.

There are various mechanisms in place

- a) Board workplan to scrutinise performance and undertake engagement with individual lived experience examples
- b) Annual review of the YJ Plan
- c) Review of the strategy 20-22 which has informed thinking re strategy 22-24

d) There will be a review of the strategy in summer 23 to inform actions

STAGE 4: BUDGET

10. What is the budget for this policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service? Are any parts of it allocated to children and young people?

In 2022/23

- Role redesign in leadership team included a participation lead
- Budget for participation was allocated in relation to Summer Programme.
- Resource allocated to Participation group and CFC training

Budget for 23/24 both for the YJ plan 23/24 and the strategy 22-24 will be informed by planning in winter 22/23


STAGE 5: IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

11. What actions have been identified or changes made to the policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service as a result of this assessment?

Strategy formulation since January 2022 was informed by UNICEF-UK stage A and B training for c 12 staff from strategic to practice . In March to May YP involvement informed the title, commitments, focus events, quotes and case studies.

AUTHORISATION

The template should be completed by the Lead Officer of the identified policy/ strategy/ project/ procedure/ service and approved by the appropriate manager.

Completed By:	Graham Robb , Independent chair Cardiff YJ board Angharad Thomas , OM Cardiff YJS Natalie Holohan , Senior Officer Planning & Interventions
Date:	Approved by Cardiff YJ Board January 2023
Job Title:	Graham Robb , Independent chair Cardiff YJ board
Approved By:	
Job Title:	Director
Directorate/ Service:	Children's Services

Governance & Decision-Making is owned by the Cardiff Youth Justice Board .

Where it is considered that a CRIA is required, you must append the completed form to the Cabinet or Officer Decision Report. A copy must also be emailed to the Child Friendly Cardiff Team ChildFriendlyCardiff@cardiff.gov.uk

Advice & Support

UNICEF Child Rights Impact Assessment Guidance for Local Government:

[Child rights impact assessment - Child Friendly Cities & Communities \(unicef.org.uk\)](https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-rights-impact-assessment-child-friendly-cities-communities)

For further information or assistance in completing the CRIA, please email the Child Friendly Cardiff Team ChildFriendlyCardiff@cardiff.gov.uk