



**Youth Justice**  
Agency

Corporate Plan 2008 - 2011  
Business Plan 2008 - 2009

# Corporate and Business Plan

# 0809





## Foreword

As we move forward into the 2008-2009 business year we do so with confidence. We have a business plan which is evidence based, needs led and outcomes focused. It is a challenging plan set against a tight Comprehensive Spending Review which allows little new money for developments. This has meant that we have had to review our priorities and move resources to where we believe they will make the most impact.

We have taken account of the legislative and policy background in which we will be operating. This includes the implementation of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 which aims to improve public protection through the better management of court sentences. We have already done much in preparation for this Order which includes the introduction of new assessment tools which have been specifically tailored for our Reducing Re-offending Framework for Practice. This framework has restorative principles at its core and introduces a stepped menu of interventions which depend on the assessed risk of the young offender - the higher the risk, the greater the intensity and duration of intervention. This means that a young person judged as being at low risk of re-offending will have an intervention based upon repairing the harm caused; whereas, someone deemed as being at high risk of harm to others (through violent or sexual behaviour) will have the most intensive supervision and intervention plans. These plans will require restrictions on his/her behaviour and movements and may also include support to restore relationships in the family and community.

During 2007-2008 the Agency had a number of very positive inspections by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland. The reports on the operation and standards of the Youth Conference Service and on Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre made a number of recommendations which give us a firm basis to further improve our services. In the year ahead we intend to produce new Agency-wide minimum standards for services and case-management.

Similarly the re-offending statistics for 2005, published recently by the NIO Statistics and Research Branch, gave us encouraging figures for court orders supervised by the Agency. This was particularly the case for Youth Conference orders which showed 56% of young people had not re-offended during a one year follow up period. Figures were even better for diversionary youth conferences where 69% had not re-offended. By any comparison these were good outcomes and were due in no small measure to the skills, expertise and commitment of our staff. Further analysis of the re-offending figures gave us valuable information for how to best target priority offenders.

Results from the January 2008 Omnibus study showed that only 41% of those surveyed had confidence in how the Agency deals with young people accused of crime. This is an area where we must improve and we have set a key performance target to that effect. We believe that the low rating has much to do with the negative media coverage young people receive and a general perception that the criminal justice system is too soft on young people who offend.

Yet our experience is that when members of the public come into contact with the Agency they are favourably impressed with what we achieve. This is borne out with our survey of victims who attend youth conferences which shows that 90% of victims are satisfied with the process and outcomes and that they prefer it to the traditional retributive model of justice. It behoves us to better explain to the public the nature of our services and the good outcomes being achieved.

Overall the Youth Justice Agency seeks to work collectively with other services, families and community strengths to deliver positive outcomes for the young people and victims we work with. In doing so we hope to make communities safer and deliver justice for all.

Bill Lockhart  
Chief Executive

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## Management and Accountability

In line with the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Review, the Youth Justice Agency was established in April 2003 as an executive agency of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). It operates under the terms of a Framework document which defines the responsibilities of, and the relationship between, the Agency, the NIO, Ministers and Parliament. The Chief Executive is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Agency in accordance with its Framework Document. Youth justice policy is separate from the functions of the Agency and is currently one of the responsibilities of the Criminal Justice Directorate of the NIO.

The Agency delivers a range of services, often in partnership with others, with particular emphasis on helping children to address their offending behaviour, diverting them from crime, assisting their integration into the community and meeting the needs of the victims of youth crime. This is achieved through shared standards, protocols and service level agreements.

This Corporate and Business Plan follows on from a fundamental review of the Agency's key priorities which was carried in 2006-2007. It takes into account the wider social, economic and political context in which the Agency operates and seeks to align itself with Government strategic targets for children and young people.

The Chief Executive of the Agency is a member of the NIO Criminal Justice Board, which aims to secure an improved service to the public through better co-operation, co-ordination and accountability in the administration of the Northern Ireland criminal justice system.

The Agency's Management Board is its top management group and focuses primarily on policy, planning and priority setting and monitoring of business performance. The current Management Board consists of: -

- Chief Executive
- Director of Community Services
- Director of Youth Conference Service
- Director of Custodial Services
- Director of Corporate Services
- Two Non-Executive Directors

The Agency has an Audit Committee, chaired by a Non-Executive Director, which supports the Chief Executive in discharging his Accounting Officer responsibilities in relation to risk, control and governance and associated assurances.

All the services delivered by the Agency are subject to inspection and review by the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice. Similarly, these services may also be subject to review by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The Agency has in place a Child Protection Policy and a Victims Charter which together provide safeguards for the two prime groups for whom we have responsibility – young people and victims of youth crime.

It also has a Complaints Charter which enables anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately by the Agency to speak out so that concerns can be addressed.

Copies of all three documents are available from the Agency website – [www.youthjusticeagency.ni.gov.uk](http://www.youthjusticeagency.ni.gov.uk).

## Services Provided

There are three operational strands to the service provided by the Agency – Community Services, Youth Conference Service and Custodial Services.

A Corporate Services Directorate provides for the management and delivery of personnel, finance, business planning, information technology and other support functions on behalf of the Chief Executive. It also provides a central point of reference for those requiring information about the Agency, maintains the Agency website and is responsible for the co-ordination and distribution of all publications.

### Community Services

The Agency's Community Services are delivered through locally based and accessible facilities across Northern Ireland.

Community Services are tasked with supervision of youth conference orders and plans, community responsibility orders, attendance centre orders and reparation orders.

Community Services work closely with colleagues in PSNI and PBNI, delivering interventions designed to challenge and support young people in avoiding re-offending, encourage integration with their families and communities and promote reparation.

Community Services contribute to work with young people in custody with the objective of achieving a safe return to the community. They deliver the Agency bail strategy through the Bail Supervision and Support Scheme and by providing access, in partnership with others, to intensive bail support and to bail fostering.

Through co-operation with Health and Social Care Trusts, Education and Library Boards and a range of voluntary sector bodies, Community Services aim to contribute to prevention services for children and young people vulnerable to offending.

All community based services seek to build links with their local communities to encourage appropriate diversionary activity, to respond to anti-social behaviour and to provide opportunities for integration and reparation.

Community Services staff represent the Agency on Area Child Protection Committees, Community Safety Partnerships, Local Child Protection Panels and contribute to Children's Services Planning through membership of Children and Young Peoples Committees and working groups.

Independent evaluations of the Community Services model of partnership, the Bail Support Scheme, and the community responsibility order all concluded that community based interventions are effective in changing attitudes and behaviour of young people.

The most recent evaluation of the attendance centre order, reporting in 2008, concluded that the dynamic model of practice incorporating restorative measures and desistance approaches, integrated with a flexible response to addressing needs and building on strengths, is the distinguishing characteristic of Community Services and is in line with the latest research into effectiveness.

### Youth Conference Service

The Criminal Justice Review recommended that restorative justice should be integrated into the youth justice system in Northern Ireland, using a youth conference model based in statute. The Youth Conference Service was established in December 2003, initially in the greater Belfast area, and over a three year period extended its coverage to all areas of Northern Ireland.





# 1 Introduction

The Youth Conference Service aims to develop restorative approaches which challenge young people who have offended to make amends to their victims for their behaviour and to put in place actions which will contribute to prevention of further offending. It works with young people referred by two criminal justice processes:

- young people who admit their offence can be referred by the Public Prosecution Service for a pre-court diversionary conference;
- those who have appeared before the court, have been found guilty of an offence and have consented will also, in most circumstances, be referred to the Youth Conference Service.

The youth conferencing system focuses on:

- reparative justice and meeting the needs of victims, so giving them a real place in the youth conference, rather than just regarding it as a means to reform the young person who has offended;
- rehabilitative justice, where what is important is the prevention of re-offending by the young person, so that the youth conference focuses on offending behaviour;
- proportionality, rather than pure retributive justice;
- making amends for the harm done, clearly separating the young person who has offended from the offence and focusing on the potential for

reintegrating the young person into the community and on the prevention of re-offending;

- repairing relationships which have been damaged or broken by crime;
- devolving power to youth conference participants to create the youth conference and the plan, but requiring subsequent approval for the plan from the court for cases which have gone to court;
- encouraging participation by young people who have offended, victims, and significant others in the process.

An independent evaluation of the youth conference scheme, undertaken by Queens University Belfast in 2006, was very positive and concluded that the

conferencing process was progressing well and, during the period of the research, had become established as a mainstream approach to young people who come into contact with the criminal justice system. One of the main findings was the high level of participation and satisfaction of offenders and victims with the new system which compares favourably with similar schemes in operation internationally.

A further examination of the Youth Conferencing Service was carried out in late 2007 by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate NI and their findings, published in February 2008, were also very positive and confirmed their strong support for the principle and value of Youth Conferencing to the criminal justice system.

## Custodial Services

The rationalisation of the Juvenile Justice estate was completed in January 2007 with the opening of Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre and the closure of the old Rathgael site. Woodlands has been designed as a centre of national and international excellence in secure care, offering a wide range of services and support to help prevent young people from re-offending. It provides a safe, secure and stimulating environment for up to 48 boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 17 placed in custody.

Woodlands uses a child centred approach to challenge offending behaviour and address lifestyle choices. Young people attend school within the Centre and complete work in line with the Northern Ireland curriculum. All programmes of study are individualised and include a range of vocational, occupational and essential skills courses. Parallel to the education programmes are intervention programmes aimed at addressing personal development, offending behaviour, health, and recreational needs. This helps to prepare young people for return to their families and communities with a reduced risk of re-offending.

Woodlands aims to deliver best value in custodial services for young people by:

- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment;
- Tackling offending by delivering programmes on victim awareness;
- Addressing development, health, educational and recreational needs;
- Reducing risk to self and others;
- Preparing young people for their return to families and communities with a reduced risk of offending; and
- Having staff who are enthusiastic and committed in their belief that they can help young people make life-changing choices.

Woodlands currently provides:

- 6 residential units
- An education and vocational learning centre
  - Education uses the nationally accredited essential skills, occupational skills, AQA/NSP and GCSE exam base in a range of curricular areas including home economics, English, mathematics, science, motor vehicle studies, PE, woodwork, art, creative media studies, geography, history and business studies.
- Sports and leisure centre with swimming pool, fitness suite, health and fitness programmes
- Programmes intervention
  - "Offending is Not the Only Choice"
  - IMPACT car crime course
  - Drugs awareness
  - Social and domestic living programmes
  - Lifestyles course
  - Family work.

A full inspection of the Centre was carried out by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate NI in late 2007 and publication of their report is awaited.





## Values

In seeking to achieve our mission statement we will adhere to the following values in all that we do:

### Care for Children

- Children's rights will be protected and they will be treated with fairness, justice and respect.

### Respect for Victims

- The needs of victims of youth crime will be respected.

### Integrity

- Honesty and openness will govern our thinking and actions.

### Our Staff

- Staff are our most important asset and we are fully committed to supporting them in all aspects of their work.

### Continuous Improvement

- We will embrace change and strive to deliver continuous improvement and maximise value for money.

### Equality and Diversity

- We will embrace diversity and are committed to equality for all.

### Inclusion

- We will encourage the active participation of children, families, victims and communities.

## Mission Statement

**Our aim is to reduce youth crime and to build confidence in the youth justice system**

## Operating Environment

The operation of the Youth Justice Agency and its ability to carry out the programme of work contained in this Corporate and Business Plan are directly influenced by the sentencing practice of the courts, the resources available to the Agency and by legislative and policy initiatives, particularly those from other parts of the criminal justice system. The Agency operates in a very demanding environment with a growing volume and complexity of work undertaken and against a background of major changes and developments occurring within the youth

justice system over the next few years and the central feature of efficiency within the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.

Significant developments which have recently occurred or are likely to occur within the currency of this plan which have a strong influence on our operating environment include:

- Devolution of Policing and Justice
- Implementation of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 which seeks to build better public protection structures through better management of offending
- Implementation of the Charter for Youth Justice within Northern Ireland

- Creation of a Ministerial Group on Reducing Offending to provide strategic oversight and direction and increase cross-departmental collaboration within Northern Ireland
- Re-establishment of Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People
- Establishment of a Learning and Skills Forum to support cross-Government work on the education / learning and skills agenda for young offenders in Northern Ireland
- Action plan arising from the OFMDFM Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People
- Implementation of the Agency's Reducing Re-offending Strategy
- Implementation of Criminal Justice Inspectorate for Northern Ireland report on Avoidable Delay in the processing of Criminal Cases in Northern Ireland





- Publication of an NIO consultation paper on Alternatives to Custody
- Review of Public Administration
- The Government's efficiency programme including the drive towards shared services
- 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR 2007) budget allocations
- NI Departments Children's Funding package
- Major investment in prevention and early intervention services

The main planning assumptions under which the Agency will operate during 2008-2011 are:-

- The Agency is required to contribute towards the overall NIO Public Service Agreement, the NIO Departmental Strategic Objectives, and the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland objectives and targets.
- The services provided by the Agency will continue to be delivered irrespective of the possible devolution of criminal justice responsibility to the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- The Agency will deliver a range of services in line with Government priorities and the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement.
- The Agency will provide an efficient and effective service and maximise value for money.
- The Agency will continue to deliver court orders, diversionary services, and invest in preventative initiatives and, where appropriate, in partnership with others.

- A restorative justice approach will be embedded across all service delivery areas of the Agency.
- The maximum number of children held in the Juvenile Justice Centre will be 48.
- There will be increasing cross-border co-operation on children's services and criminal justice matters.
- The Agency will retain Investor in People accreditation.
- The Agency will fully integrate with the NIO Causeway Programme which aims to improve performance of criminal justice organisations in Northern Ireland by sharing information electronically.

### NIO Public Service Agreement

Public Service Agreements (PSAs) outline key priority outcomes the Government wants to achieve in the next spending period (2008-2011). In developing this Corporate and Business Plan, the Agency has taken cognisance of the NIO PSAs which are centred on two broad themes:

- **Make Communities Safer** – tackling crime, reducing re-offending and increasing public confidence in policing to increase public perception of safety;
- **Justice for All** – reducing time to trial in dealing with offenders, increasing public confidence, and improving victim and witness satisfaction in the criminal justice system.

These PSAs underpin five Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) set by the

Northern Ireland Office for the 2008-2011 period. These DSOs are cross-cutting but one in particular falls to the Criminal Justice Directorate to take lead responsibility – DSO3: to deliver an independent, fair and effective criminal justice system which supports and protects the community.

The PSAs are supplemented by Key Performance Indicators and targets for achievement by March 2011 which include:-

- Reducing more serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences
- Enabling people to feel safer in their communities
- Reducing re-offending
- Increasing public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of the criminal justice system
- Improving victim and witness satisfaction with the criminal justice system
- Shortening the time taken to progress criminal cases in the Crown Court, Magistrates' Courts and Youth Courts.

### Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland (CJSNI)

The Agency is one of seven main statutory organisations which make up the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland (CJSNI) whose purpose is to deliver a criminal justice system which serves and protects the people of Northern Ireland and in which the whole community can have confidence. It is governed by a Criminal Justice Board chaired by the Director of Criminal Justice, Northern Ireland Office.

### Charter For Youth Justice

Co-operation between statutory and voluntary bodies across the youth justice sector is vital in providing an effective service to deal with youth crime. These arrangements have been formalised into a Charter for Youth Justice, published by the

Criminal Justice Board, which sets out a series of principles underlying a successful youth justice system and priorities for collective action.

### Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI)

Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI) refers to the arrangements established for the risk management of sexual and violent offenders and certain potentially dangerous persons whose assessed risks require multi agency input to the delivery of individual risk management plans. PPANI is not a statutory body in itself but a set of arrangements through which agencies can work together and share information, in discharging their statutory responsibilities, to better protect the public in a co-ordinated manner. The Youth

Justice Agency is mindful of its statutory

obligations and wider responsibilities to public protection and will participate fully in these multi-agency arrangements.

### Partnership

The Agency will work in partnership with other agencies and service providers to meet the needs of and provide outcomes for young people, their families and victims.

### Consultation

In developing its policies, the Agency will consult with and obtain feedback from a broad range of key stakeholders and partners, and in particular, children, their families, victims of youth crime and those organisations representing them. It will also take into account developments and best practice in other jurisdictions. The Agency will seek to influence policy development within the broader youth justice sector in areas such as:

- delivery of the OFMDFM Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People;
- outworkings of the Review of Public Administration;
- development of community planning; and
- introduction of a statutory duty to collaborate.





## Human Rights

In carrying out its duties the Agency will strive to protect the human rights of all those with whom it comes into contact and meet its obligations under domestic and international law. The Agency will pay due regard to the principles and provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children will receive the highest standards of care while they are with us and at all times the Agency will comply with its child protection policy and procedures.

## Child Protection Policy And Procedures

The Agency is committed to the protection of children and young people from abuse and seeks to achieve this by operating safe, secure and caring environments that address the needs of the child whilst reducing risk to and from others. All children, staff, parents and representatives of other organisations who use or have contact with Agency services are encouraged to be alert to and report

any concerns about abuse. All concerns, whether past or present, will be responded to in keeping with these principles and procedures.

The Agency has a published Child Protection Policy document which is compatible with the DHSS&PS guidance "Co-operating to Safeguard Children".

## Victims Of Youth Crime

The Agency is committed to fairness and inclusivity with victims for whom it provides a service. It recognises the best interests of the child with whom it works are of importance whilst aiming to simultaneously balance the needs of victims. The Agency

has published a Victims Charter which provides guidance on treating victims according to their particular needs, both as victims and as an individual.

It takes account of vulnerable victims and the need to consider cultural, racial, religious and sexual identities of victims.

## Complaints Charter

The Agency has an easy to understand and responsive complaints procedure which encourages anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately by the Agency to speak out so that concerns can be addressed. Lessons learned from complaints will be used to improve and influence the development of Agency services.

An independent aspect to the Agency's complaints process is delivered through an Independent Complaints Reviewer.

## Health And Safety

The Agency accepts the responsibilities as outlined within the scope of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978. The Agency will, therefore, do all it can to ensure the full commitment at all levels of management and the cooperation of all members of staff in order to meet its obligations under this legislation.

The Agency also accepts its responsibility to safeguard the health and safety of all young persons placed into custody and all other persons who may be visiting or working at any of the premises occupied by the Agency.

The Agency has in place an overarching Health & Safety Committee which meets quarterly. A Health & Safety representative from each Directorate has a seat on this committee. Health & Safety Committee's for each Directorate will be established in early 2008-2009.

## Equality And Diversity

The Agency is committed to the promotion of good relations among adults and children of differing religious belief, political opinion, racial group, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, or having dependents or not. It is committed to challenging sectarianism and racism and believes that good relations are inextricably linked with equality of opportunity. It will promote a working environment where any member of staff, victim, or child in our care is treated with dignity and respect, and does not feel discriminated against or harassed.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. These duties are designed, in particular, to ensure that equality issues are integral to the whole range of public policy decision making. The Agency is fully committed to the NIO Equality Scheme.

## Disability Discrimination Act

The Agency is committed to compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all managers have received disability awareness training. Where practical and reasonable to do so, Agency premises and facilities will comply with the Act.

## Sustainable Development

The Agency is committed to the Government's policy on sustainable development as set out in the Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy and in its day to day activities it strives towards maintaining the best possible environmental performance.

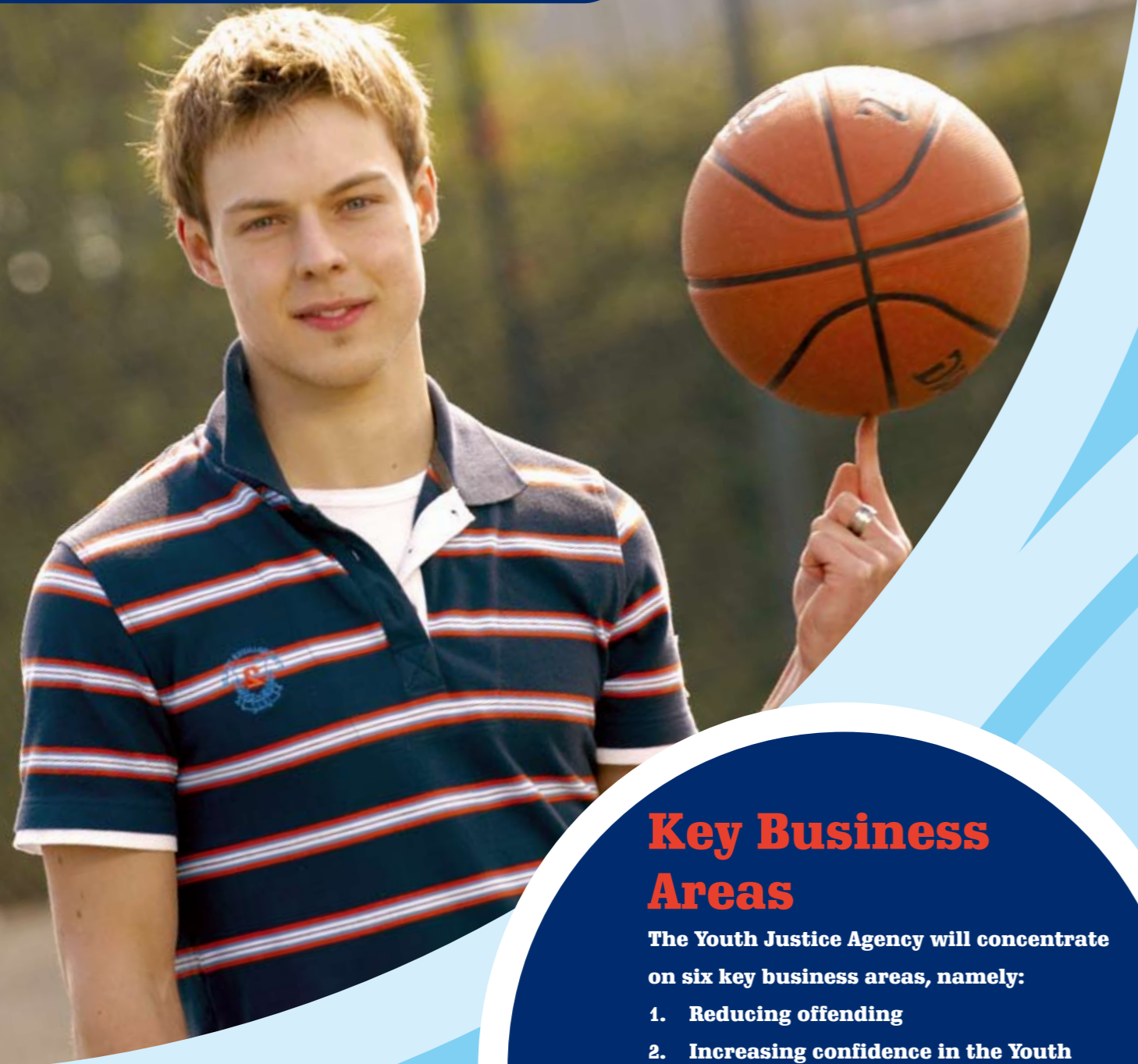
The Agency has in place a policy on sustainable development to be applied across the organisation and all staff have been tasked to comply with the procedures.

## Freedom Of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides a general right of access to information held by public authorities in the UK subject to certain exemptions. It is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public sector bodies, and therefore facilitate better public understanding as to how public authorities carry out their duties, why they make the decisions they do, and how they spend public money.

The Agency displays on its website the processes by which information requests can be made.





## Key Business Areas

The Youth Justice Agency will concentrate on six key business areas, namely:

1. Reducing offending
2. Increasing confidence in the Youth Justice Agency
3. Developing restorative justice
4. Delivering positive outcomes for young people
5. Ensuring safe and appropriate use of custody
6. Managing resources

This Corporate Plan section sets out the Youth Justice Agency's vision and strategic direction over the three year period 2008 – 2011. For each key business area, it outlines the strategic aims, the key performance indicators by which delivery against the strategic aims can be measured, and the main strategies adopted to deliver the desired outcomes.

## 1. Reducing Offending

The Agency will work in partnership with others in diverting children from crime and supporting the development of life skills to assist in their integration into the community. Diversionary schemes are in place aimed at working with those children who have entered, or are likely to enter, the youth justice system due to their offending behaviour. Further diversionary and preventative mechanisms will be introduced in line with identified needs, effective practice and available resources.

The Agency will also support children and young people who commit offences to face up to the consequences of offending, to make amends for their crime to their victims, and to take steps to stop offending through restorative processes. It will fulfil its responsibility for delivering statutory orders and monitor the progress of children and young people under its supervision. The Agency is committed to fulfilling its duties under the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 and participating in the multi-agency working groups which underpin the changes to the sentencing framework.

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To reduce re-offending by children referred to the Agency and assist their integration into the community

### Key performance indicator

Agency contribution towards the delivery of the NIO PSA target 2: "Make Communities Safer" - to reduce overall re-offending rates by March 2011; and to reduce serious re-offending by March 2011

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- Implementation of the Agency's Reducing Re-offending Strategy
- Focus on the diversion of first time entrants from the youth justice system
- Identify young people at risk of offending through an assessment of risk and protective factors
- Provide a continuum of effective community based programmes to reduce the risk of offending and admission to custody
- Provide a range of effective custodial based programmes to reduce the risk of offending and promote integration into the community
- Seamless transition from custody to community services engagement
- Contribute to a strategy to target priority offending by young people

## 2. Increasing Confidence In The Youth Justice Agency

The Agency will build confidence within the community by delivering an open, fair and effective service which protects the community and safeguards the rights of all with whom it comes into contact. Primarily it will take into account the needs of young people and victims.

The Agency will continue to celebrate successes, develop public awareness of existing practice and new initiatives. It will provide information to sentencers on the availability of programmes and other interventions.

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To increase confidence in and promote awareness of the services delivered by the Agency

### Key performance indicators

Public confidence levels – as measured by the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey

Public awareness levels – as measured by the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- Work in partnership with others to develop procedures which will improve case progress timescales within the youth justice system
- Engage the community in our work
- Keep under review our range of partnerships and delivery mechanisms, particularly at community level
- Implement a Communications and Public Relations Strategy
- Conduct a programme of independent evaluation to measure stakeholder confidence and awareness levels
- Educate young people with whom the Agency comes in contact about the harm of drug and alcohol abuse

## 3. Developing Restorative Justice

The restorative justice model has already been established as an integral part of the statutory youth justice system in Northern Ireland in addressing the needs of both the young person and the victim of youth crime. The Agency will seek to ensure that restorative justice principles underpin the work that we do and will further develop restorative approaches which challenge young people who have offended to make amends for their behaviour to their victims and to put in place actions which contribute to the prevention of further offending. The rights of victims to redress will be recognised and they will be given a real opportunity to contribute to the restorative justice process and obtain satisfactory closure.

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To deliver world class restorative justice

### Key performance indicators

Offender participation and satisfaction rates

Victim participation and satisfaction rates

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- Embrace restorative approaches across all service delivery areas of the Agency
- Support the piloting of restorative practices in schools, children's homes, custody and as part of the anti-social behaviour and alcohol/substance misuse strategies
- Enhance the restorative component of the Reparation Order, Community Responsibility Order, Attendance Centre Order and Juvenile Justice Centre Order
- Measure and publicise victim, young person and family feedback on the youth conferencing process and other service delivery areas of the Agency





## 4. Delivering Positive Outcomes For Young People

The ten year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland outlines the Government's vision for the reshaping of children's services in order to achieve six outcomes:

- be healthy
- enjoying, learning and achieving
- living in safety and with stability
- experiencing economic and environmental well-being
- contributing positively to community and society
- living in a society which respects their rights

Young people will be supported in developing socially and emotionally and will be encouraged to build self confidence, develop positive relationships and successfully deal with significant life transitions and challenges. The Agency will provide a range of educational, life skills, behavioural and family based interventions to increase choices, build resilience and to prepare the young people for full integration into the community.

A system to measure those outcomes within the Agency's influence continues to evolve, with an initial focus on

quantifying links to education, training and employment; and voluntary and community organisations.

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To maximise the opportunity for young people to make a positive contribution to society

### Key performance indicator

Outcomes for young people involved in or at risk of offending

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- All young people engaged with the Agency have their risk of offending and other needs identified and, following assessment, receive prompt access to specialist and mainstream services, as appropriate, to address their level of risk and need
- Put in place mechanisms to ensure the rights of children engaged with the Agency and that they are safe from crime, exploitation, bullying, discrimination and violence
- Participate in and influence the delivery of the NI Children's Strategy, Children's Services Planning and

Community Safety Partnerships to provide better outcomes for young people

- Deliver an integrated strategy to improve physical health, emotional well-being and reduce substance abuse
- Improve access to Agency services through the Renewing Communities initiative
- Support young people and families in contact with the Agency in accessing mainstream services
- Operate an effective mental health strategy
- Develop mechanisms and procedures to allow the voices of young people to be heard and empower them to shape the services they receive
- Develop a Social Inclusion Pathways Model which addresses the six main outcomes targeted in the Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland

## 5. Ensuring Safe And Appropriate Use Of Custody

The aim of the Juvenile Justice Centre is to provide young people placed in custody with a safe, secure and stimulating environment, to reduce their offending behaviour and to successfully re-integrate them into the community by making a positive contribution to their knowledge, life skills and experience. The Agency will seek to ensure that custody will only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

### Strategic aims 2008-2011

To operate a safe, secure and stimulating environment for children

To work to ensure that custody is only used when absolutely necessary

### Key performance indicators

Time elapsed prior to risk assessment being undertaken

Number of high risk escapes from within the Juvenile Justice Centre

Percentage of young people remanded by the Courts that have a bail assessment commenced within 5 working days

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- Establish Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre as a model of best practice
- Work to minimise the use of custody
- Expand alternatives to custody such as Intensive Supervision and Support Programmes and intensive fostering for young people
- Provide access to bail support and supervision schemes
- Challenge the number of young people admitted to custody under PACE
- Deliver enhanced educational and supporting programmes
- Promote and encourage family involvement during the period that the young person is in custody



## 6. Managing Resources

The Agency's staff are its single most important resource. They need to be a competent, highly motivated, professional, well trained and well-managed workforce, working in an Agency in which everyone has the opportunity to develop personally within his or her own job and the wider organisation.

Continuous supervision, training and development will be undertaken to provide staff with the skills and knowledge required to support them in meeting the business needs of the Agency and delivering a high quality service.

The Agency is committed to the effective, efficient and economic use of the

financial resources allocated to it under the Comprehensive Spending Review settlement. It will carry out reviews as necessary to improve efficiency and achieve best value for money. It will also operate sound corporate governance arrangements.

### Strategic aims 2008-2011

To respect and value our staff and develop their potential to enhance quality of service delivered by the Agency

To use resources effectively, deliver best value and operate best practice in Corporate Governance

### Key performance indicators

Retain Investor in People accreditation

Level of expenditure

### Main Strategies to Deliver Outcomes by 2011

- Retain Investor in People accreditation
- Implement a comprehensive Human Resource strategy
- Embed a performance management culture throughout the Agency
- Facilitate staff to achieve an appropriate professionally accredited qualification
- Carry out staff surveys as deemed necessary to gain feedback from staff
- Carry out efficiency reviews as necessary to ensure best value for money is achieved
- Ensure robust corporate governance arrangements are in place in line with Treasury guidelines
- Develop an Agency IT case management system fully integrated with the NIO Causeway system
- Define and agree responsibilities of the Agency and relationships with other criminal justice partners
- Seek to influence others to invest in partnerships aimed at preventing offending

This Business Plan section sets out what the Agency plans to deliver in 2008-2009 as part of the Corporate Plan 2008-2011.

For each of the same six key business areas, it reaffirms the strategic aims and the key performance indicators by which delivery against the strategic aims can be measured, but also outlines the key performance targets and development objectives against which the Agency's progress will be assessed. Each of these assumes a planned completion date of 31 March 2009 unless indicated otherwise.

At the conclusion of the 2008-2009 business year, a formal assessment of performance against these targets will be published by way of an annual report.

Each Directorate of the Agency will have its own Directorate business plan which is derived from and underpins the key performance targets and development objectives outlined in this plan.

The Agency recognises that efficiency will present a major challenge to the Agency over the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), which covers the years 2008-2009 to 2010-2011, and that plans need to be put in place this business year to achieve efficiency gains.

## Key Business Areas

The Youth Justice Agency will concentrate on six key business areas, namely:

1. Reducing offending
2. Increasing confidence in the Youth Justice Agency
3. Developing restorative justice
4. Delivering positive outcomes for young people
5. Ensuring safe and appropriate use of custody
6. Managing resources

A glossary of definitions has been provided (see page 29) to help explain how performance against a number of the key targets is to be measured.





## 1. Reducing Offending

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To reduce re-offending by children referred to the Agency and assist their integration into the community

### Key Performance Targets

**KPT 1:** 95% of all children subject to a Juvenile Justice Centre Order will have a re-integration plan

**KPT 2:** Achieve an 85% compliance rate within the statutory timeframe for all children who are subject to a community disposal supervised by the Agency [see Note 1]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 1:** Compile 2006 youth offending rates for court orders supervised by the Agency and produce a comparative analysis against 2005 baseline figures [see Note 2]

**DEV 2:** Implement the new Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI) legislative requirements in relation to young people

**DEV 3:** Contribute to the implementation of the Northern Ireland regional strategy for the prevention of offending by children and young people through strategic influence and technical support

**DEV 4:** Establish an Agency wide strategy for addressing priority youth offenders on Juvenile Justice Centre Orders [see Note 3]

## 2. Increasing Confidence In The Youth Justice Agency

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To increase confidence in and promote awareness of the services delivered by the Agency

### Key Performance Targets

**KPT 3:** Achieve an increase in public confidence in how the Agency deals with young people accused of crime from 41% to at least 45%, as measured by the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey [see Note 4]

**KPT 4:** 85% of youth conference reports to be returned to court within statutory timescales [see Note 5]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 5:** Deliver a Communications and Public Relations strategy which raises awareness of and confidence in the work of the Agency among stakeholders

**DEV 6:** Educate young people referred to the Agency about the harm of drug and alcohol abuse (in response to the findings of the January 2008 Omnibus Survey)







## 4. Delivering Positive Outcomes For Young People

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To maximise the opportunity for young people to make a positive contribution to society

### Key Performance Target

**KPT 7:** Following the introduction of a common risk assessment system, all young people referred to the Agency under a court order to have an assessment of risk and strengths completed within 4 weeks of the commencement of the order [see Note 7]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 10:** Implement the strategy for mental health in relation to young people

**DEV 11:** Implement a system to measure satisfaction levels of young people and families with the services they received from the Agency

**DEV 12:** Develop a social inclusion pathways model for all young people and families referred to the Agency [see Note 8]

**DEV 13:** Pilot a drugs and alcohol screening and assessment tool for use within the Agency to identify young people's needs and inform appropriate interventions

## 3. Developing Restorative Justice

### Strategic aim 2008-2011

To deliver world class restorative justice

### Key Performance Targets

**KPT 5:** At least 80% of referrals to result in a youth conference and of those, at least 70% of young offenders to be satisfied with the outcome

**KPT 6:** Maintain a victim attendance rate of at least 60% for youth conferences and of those, at least 75% of victims to be satisfied with the outcome [see Note 6]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 7:** Implement the reducing re-offending strategy through a restorative justice framework across the Agency

**DEV 8:** Review the relationship between the Agency and others engaged in restorative practices

**DEV 9:** Implement the agreed recommendations of the CJINI (Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland) inspection of the Youth Conference Service





## 5. Ensuring Safe And Appropriate Use Of Custody

### Strategic aims 2008-2011

To operate a safe, secure and stimulating environment for children

To work to ensure that custody is only used when absolutely necessary

### Key Performance Targets

**KPT 8:** All new admissions to custody to have a risk assessment conducted within 24 hours

**KPT 9:** No escapes from the Juvenile Justice Centre [see Note 9]

**KPT 10:** At least 90% of young people remanded by the Courts to have a bail assessment commenced within 5 working days [see Note 10]

**KPT 11:** Reduce the levels of physical restraint by 5% compared with 2007 [see Note 11]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 14:** Implement the new Juvenile Justice Centre Rules and devise Agency standards and associated policies as appropriate

**DEV 15:** Implement the agreed recommendations of the CJINI Inspection of the Juvenile Justice Centre

**DEV 16:** Develop closer working links with Hydebank Wood Young Offenders' Centre

## 6. Managing Resources

### Strategic aims 2008-2011

To respect and value our staff and develop their potential to enhance quality of service delivered by the Agency

To use resources effectively, deliver best value and operate best practice in Corporate Governance

### Key Performance Targets

**KPT 12:** Maintain expenditure within approved budgetary limits

**KPT 13:** Publish and lay the Agency's audited 2007-2008 Annual Report and Accounts before Parliament prior to its summer recess

**KPT 14:** At least 75% of staff to confirm that their learning and development needs are being met [see Note 12]

### Development Objectives

**DEV 17:** Commence the roll out of a mental health first aid training programme to all staff within the Agency

**DEV 18:** Implement the agreed recommendations of the CJINI Inspection of Corporate Governance within the Agency

**DEV 19:** Develop a comprehensive case management system which will enable the Agency to provide a more efficient and effective service to meet the individual needs of young people who offend

**DEV 20:** Review and produce integrated performance standards across the Agency

**DEV 21:** Complete a scoping study to enable the Agency to meet its responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

**DEV 22:** Prepare for the introduction of Account NI (effective from April 2009) through participation in the NIO's shared services programme

## Glossary of Definitions

**Note 1:** This target includes all children subject to any of the following orders: attendance centre order, reparation order, community responsibility order, court ordered youth conference order and diversionary youth conference plan. Compliance means that the young person has satisfactorily completed the order, that is, fulfilled all conditions of the order or plan. Breach or revocation of an order will be used to measure instances of non-compliance which will in turn allow quantification of the compliance rate

**Note 2:** Re-offending rate relates to proven re-offending - where an offender re-offends during a one-year follow-up period and is subsequently convicted for this offence

**Note 3:** Priority youth offenders includes the following groups:- serious or persistent offenders leaving custody; offenders who have reached their third Youth Conference; young sex offenders; and those who offend whilst in residential care and who run the risk of being fast-streamed into custody

**Note 4:** This survey is conducted several times each year by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and is designed to provide a snapshot of the behaviour, lifestyle and views of a representative sample of people in Northern Ireland

**Note 5:** A youth conference report is an agreed action plan or recommendation prepared at the completion of a youth conference for presentation back to court

**Note 6:** Victim attendance rate measures the percentage of conferences which have a victim present. This includes face to face attendance, via video-link, via telephone conference and participation from an adjoining viewing room

**Note 7:** Common risk assessment system to be introduced by Autumn 2008 - target cannot be measured until then

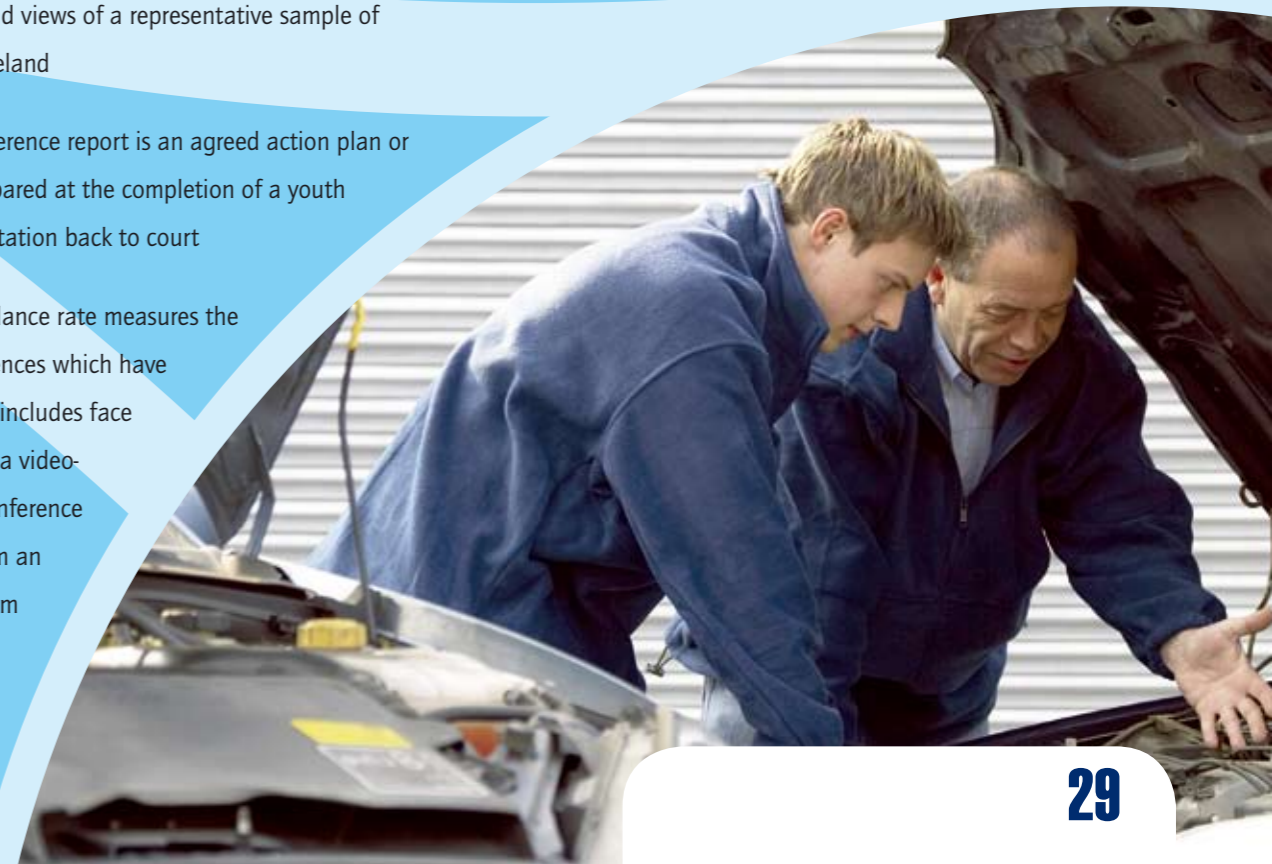
**Note 8:** Pathways to social inclusion covers a number of distinct strands such as accommodation, training, education, employment, recreational, health and family involvement

**Note 9:** Target relates to escapes from within the secure perimeter of Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre.

**Note 10:** "Bail assessment commenced" - staff will have conducted an initial assessment of the child's situation pertaining to bail and investigated potential sources of support should a subsequent application for bail be successful

**Note 11:** Juvenile Justice Centre Rules define physical restraint as the use of Physical Control in Care (PCC) to ensure good order and discipline and to prevent injury to self, others, escape and damage to property

**Note 12:** Staff feedback in relation to learning and development needs to be obtained from performance appraisal review process.





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