

**London Criminal Justice Board publishes ambitious strategy to make youth justice work better**

Better intervention and faster justice which is more responsive and understandable to young people are some of the aims of a new youth justice strategy published by the London Criminal Justice Board (CJB).

The strategy<sup>1</sup> was formally adopted at the July meeting of the London CJB and includes proposals to deliver an improved youth justice system that supports public safety, prevents offending and helps young people realise a positive future.

Proposals include London's criminal justice agencies and local authorities using a new risk assessment process (Youth Safety Assessment Tool) to better identify young people at risk of offending or victimisation.

We are also piloting a 'Triage' model at the point of arrest, which will bring Youth Offending Team (YOT) expertise into the police custody suite to assist with decision making. We anticipate that combined activity of both Y-SAT and Triage will significantly improve our responses to youth crime and victimisation.

The London CJB wants to strengthen resettlement arrangements for young people returning from youth custody, both in terms of supervision but also support so they can gain access to services that help them stay out of trouble.

There will be a renewed focus on speeding up the justice process and make it more responsive and understandable to young defendants and victims.

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Young people accused of serious or violent offences will be prioritised through to court. Those accused of minor offences and who are unlikely to re-offend will be diverted out of the criminal justice system and receive a restorative disposal.

The strategy sets out London CJB's commitment to improve victim support. Research demonstrates a strong link between victimisation and future offending<sup>2</sup> so this will also be an effective crime reduction tactic.

Working with Victim Support London, the London CJB will look to improve the support available throughout the justice process with special arrangements for those victims of serious and violent crime.

There are particular concerns about the low level of confidence of young people in criminal justice<sup>3</sup>. To counter this there are plans to promote the positive participation of young people in criminal justice and their communities. Young people will be involved in the development of this work, which includes opportunities for increasing their knowledge of criminal justice and involving them in solutions to youth crime.

### **Quotes:**

Andrew Morley, Chief Executive of the London CJB commented:

"Whilst the overall level of youth crime remains relatively stable recent youth murders have made the issue of youth justice a significant priority for Londoners. This strategy is the Board's response to this and recognises that there is a need for improvement. We are confident that we have identified the issues and have put in train an ambitious programme of work to deliver the change required to deliver a safer London for our young people."

Geoff Alltimes, Chief Executive of LB Hammersmith and Fulham and London CJB member, commented:

“We all have a role in tackling youth crime and I welcome this strategy, particularly those proposals for tangible activity to help criminal justice agencies and local authorities work together to better identify young people at risk of offending or victimisation and intervene to the benefit of the young person concerned and their communities.”

Lucy Dawes, Director of Performance for the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and London CJB member, commented:

“The YJB welcomes the new strategy and sees it as a real opportunity to bring together criminal justice agencies and local authority partners in the delivery of an improved youth justice system across London. I am particularly pleased to see work to improve services to young victims of crime, as work in this area will not only improve the life chances of young people, it will also reduce the risk of young victims becoming future offenders.

“The YJS performance dashboard will also enable CJS agencies to have a common understanding of what success in the YJS looks like. This will enable us to deliver joined up improvements and solutions.”

**Further information:**

- <sup>1</sup>A PowerPoint summary of the strategy is available by clicking [here](#)
- <sup>2</sup>[Sutherland, A., Merrington, S., Jones, S., Baker, K. & Roberts, C., \(2005\) Role of Risk and the Protective Factors Youth Justice Board](#)
- <sup>3</sup>[Metropolitan Police Authority \(2005\) Youth Scrutiny Report](#)

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