

**CHESHIRE  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD**



Criminal Justice System: working together for the public

**Annual Plan 2023/24**

**Presented to the Board –  
February 2023**

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) brings together criminal justice organisations at police force area level to support joint working and improve services. By working in partnership, the board aims to improve services to the public with the minimum costs, supported by the best available evidence.
2. Whilst recognising the different roles we all play, the challenges we face, and our operational independence, we are committed to working together in partnership in pursuit of our shared objectives, and collaborating for the good of the criminal justice system as a whole, so that we can best deliver for the communities of Cheshire.
3. In doing this, we will operate under the following principles:
  - We will seek to harness opportunities from changes in legislation and policy, unrestricted by our organisational boundaries;
  - Challenge and hold each other to account with honesty, integrity and transparency
  - Recognise that we are providing services for local communities and that they are best served by a local system which operates as a whole;
  - Develop positive relationships across the Criminal Justice System to add collective value and unblock issues that challenge our system
  - We will share information so that we can more easily identify issues and work together to solve them;
  - We will ensure appropriate attendance from our senior management who can and will make decisions, commit resources, share data and information and disseminate where appropriate
  - We will commit to understanding how disparity exists within criminal justice and work towards identifying and addressing discrimination
  - We will seek support from other partners who can help achieve our objectives.

## VISION

4. We know that the communities of Cheshire expect a local criminal justice system which supports victims, rehabilitates offenders, reduces re-offending and delivers an effective, timely and efficient service. By working together we can achieve that.
5. The Board will take a collaborative approach looking at the end-to-end processes to ensure that it operates effectively across all organisations in the criminal justice system, to deliver a seamless service. We aim to eradicate unnecessary duplication, refine processes and identify and address blockages to ensure that our vision can be delivered.

## MEMBERSHIP

6. The membership of the Board reflects the wide range of agencies involved in the Criminal Justice System. The standard membership of the Board includes senior representatives from the following organisations:
  - Police & Crime Commissioner (as Chair)
  - Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (acts as secretariat to the Board)
  - Cheshire Constabulary
  - Crown Prosecution Service
  - HM Courts & Tribunal Service
  - Judiciary
  - HM Prisons
  - Probation Service
  - Legal Aid Agency North West
  - Youth Justice Service
  - Local Authorities
  - Community Safety Partnerships
  - Remedi (Restorative Justice)
  - Witness Service
  - NHS
7. Additional members will be invited to attend the Board as appropriate.

## PRIORITIES

8. Each year, the key priorities for the Board will be reviewed and agreed. The key priorities of the Group are being addressed by a number of sub groups, as follows:

### PRIORITY 1 - REDUCE REOFFENDING

Lead partner – Probation

9. The initial focus of this work was on violence against women and girls. Progress has already been made in relation to the management of sex offenders and high-risk domestic abusers. Probation has agreed to develop specialist teams to manage sex offenders - an approach that will mirror and link more closely with the Police MOSOVO teams. The roll out of this model has now started in Cheshire West followed by Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington.
10. Progress has also been made in relation to the management of high-risk domestic abusers, who it is planned will be more effectively managed through better use of MAPPA at level 2 or 3 which will also include the allocation of a suitably trained Probation officer and or Police officer.

### PRIORITY 2 - DISPROPORTIONALITY

Lead partner – Youth Justice Service

11. This group is reviewing the 35 specific recommendations on a 'True for Cheshire' basis. Each member organisation is reviewing their own area of business against these recommendations to ensure that those entering the Criminal Justice System in Cheshire are **not** adversely affected by their ethnicity or elements of their ethnicity/nationality.
12. In undertaking this work, there will be a focus on 'explain or reform' – a structured approach to identify racial disparities, with a critical focus on solutions. It will work with communities and individuals with 'lived experience' and expert organisations, to identify the problems and work together on solutions. Responsibility for tackling disparities must be shared by all in the Criminal Justice System – striving for racial equality is not just an issue for those who are directly affected by it.

13. In undertaking its work, the Group will ensure Criminal Justice processes comply with current legal and procedural requirements including changes in legislation, practice, and guidance (i.e., Home Office, MoJ, College of Policing, NPCC etc), and look to provide a structured means of reporting performance into the Cheshire Criminal Justice Board. By understanding and addressing any disproportionality in our Criminal Justice processes or in our service for victims and witnesses, we will be able to provide a service which is more effective, fair, and equitable to all in within our communities.

## PRIORITY 3 – VICTIMS & WITNESSES

Lead partner – Police

14. The purpose of this group is to work with partners within the Criminal Justice agencies to ensure we provide a joined up supportive service for all victims throughout the whole of the Criminal Justice journey. It will do this by establishing a clear governance process utilising a Pan Cheshire approach with all criminal justice partners to collectively deliver the Victim Code rights. It will examine current compliance with the Code and identify gaps and limitations to establish improvements needed using shared data and understanding each partners responsibility in relation to each individual right to meet the needs of victims.
15. The group will oversee and direct activity in reviewing processes and associated performance in respect of the Victim Code Rights to ensure the best possible Criminal Justice outcomes to improve victim satisfaction and confidence in our processes, as well as assessing how effective our communications are with victims at every stage of the Criminal Justice journey.
16. The group will look to establish what our current victim satisfaction levels are and consider innovative ways to improve how we gather feedback at each stage of the victim's journey to improve those satisfaction levels if required.

## PRIORITY 4 – SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY

Lead partner – Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

17. The Serious Violence Duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing, and reducing serious violence in the area. The Duty also requires the specified authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the

area in the preparation of their strategy. The commencement date for the duty is 31 January 2023.

18. The Board agreed that the response to the Duty is coordinated and governed through the LCJB mechanism, ensuring that specified authorities not currently represented on the LCJB (namely the Fire & Rescue Service and the ICB) are able to take a full role in the work.

## MEASURING SUCCESS

19. All agencies should be committed to providing the data which will allow the Board to develop a performance framework. Creation of a performance framework for each of the work streams is a priority in order to increase transparency and evidence and improve outcomes.
20. We will look to use national data, where relevant, in order to identify a base line for quality which allows us to compare ourselves with other areas in the country and especially with those where improvements or innovations appear to be having a positive impact on CJ performance. However we will also seek to improve services beyond that of the baseline, both in terms of quantitative assessment and quality of delivery. We will not look to replicate data sets which look at one organisation's business only, rather that data which enables a clearer assessment of how the criminal justice system operates.
21. Locally, in due course, we will report publicly on whether the set targets for performance are being met in line with the objectives set.

## BOARD MANAGEMENT

22. The board will meet on a quarterly basis to ensure continued progress of the above priorities. Board administration will be facilitated by the Chair, with agenda items being requested three weeks prior to board meetings. Agendas, supporting documents and reports will be circulated to the board seven days prior to board meetings.
23. Priorities of the board will be reviewed annually and where appropriate, sub groups will be responsible for local joint planning, implementation, and coordinating delivery of the priorities and reporting back to the board at the quarterly meetings. All representatives should have the authority to make decisions and effective contributions within board meetings on behalf of their respective agencies and send a representative when they are unable to attend.

24. It will be the responsibility of the Criminal Justice Board Project Support Officer to manage the agenda items for the board in consultation with the Chair.

## APPENDIX – BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Membership**

Cheshire Criminal Justice Board membership will be made up of senior representatives from the following organisations:

- Police & Crime Commissioner (as Chair)
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (secretariat to the Board)
- Cheshire Constabulary
- Crown Prosecution Service
- HM Courts & Tribunal Service
- Judiciary
- HM Prisons
- Probation Service
- Legal Aid Agency North West
- Youth Justice Service
- Local Authorities
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Remedi (Restorative Justice)
- Witness Service
- NHS

### **Purpose/ Aims**

The purpose of the Cheshire Criminal Justice Board is to ensure all Criminal Justice agencies work in partnership to deliver shared aims and objectives.

- To provide a strategic forum to engage with the Police and Crime Commissioner on Criminal Justice matters.
- To support partners to deliver their aims
- To provide a central point of contact through which communication on Criminal Justice can be received, considered and disseminated.
- Monitor and improve performance on Criminal Justice system.

### **Support**

The Board will be supported by the Criminal Justice Board Support officer.

## **Priorities**

The priorities for the Cheshire Criminal Justice Board will be determined on an annual basis. The priorities for 2022/23 are:

- Reducing re-offending (focus on VAWG) [Lead agency – Probation]
- Disproportionality in the CJS [Lead agency – YOS]
- Victims & Witnesses [Lead agency – Constabulary]
- Serious Violence Duty [Lead agency – OPCC]

## **Performance Measures**

To be determined by each of the sub groups, together with overarching measures agreed by the Board.

## **Chair**

The Chair of the Board will be the Police & Crime Commissioner (or his Deputy in his absence)

## **Agenda/ Minutes**

The agenda for each meeting will be drawn up subject to approval by the Chair. Members will be invited to contribute items and supporting papers prior to meetings. The agenda and supporting papers will be circulated prior to the meeting.

Draft formal minutes and action log from each board meeting will be passed to the Chair for approval before circulation. Final minutes will be provided with papers for the forthcoming meeting.

## **Meetings**

Meetings will take place every 3 months. The meetings will be a quorate of 4 or more core members present. It is expected all Board members will attend regular meetings and any extraordinary meetings arranged. Where a Board member is unable to attend he/she will delegate attendance and participation to a senior executive member of staff as appropriate. Attendance will primarily be face-to-face, although an online option will also be made available.

Method of voting on decisions to be made shall be by a show of hands and by simple majority. In the event of a vote being necessary, each member has one vote.