



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



Implementation Statement 2021

Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027

Implementation Statement for 2021

1 Background to the Youth Justice Strategy 2021 - 2027

Developed under the guidance of an expert Steering Group which had been in place since early 2019, the Youth Justice Strategy 2021 – 2027 was published in April of 2021. The Strategy is informed by detailed consultation with key agencies and stakeholders and also reflects feedback from a public consultation process.

This Implementation Statement provides an update on the progress made in carrying forward the wide range of Objectives and Key Actions set out in the Strategy during 2021. It concentrates on a number of Priority Areas which are referenced in Appendix 3 of the Strategy.

2 Governance, Oversight and Consultation *Strategic Objective 1.1*

As set out in Appendix 2 of the Youth Justice Strategy, dedicated Governance, Oversight and Consultative structures were established or consolidated during 2021 to support and guide the implementation of the strategy.

The Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Group (YJGSG) and the Youth Justice Oversight Group (YJOG) operate to coordinate work across Departments and key agencies involved in the delivery of the Strategy. There were five meetings of each of these groups in 2021. Membership of the YJGSG and the YJOG is given at Appendix A and Appendix B of this report.

To assist consideration of key issues informal sub-groups are involved in more detailed examination in relation to:

- Allocation of resources to support Youth Diversion Project Development – see section 4 below
- Serious Offences
- Sexual Offences
- Diversion in relation to young adults aged 18-24
- Training for front-line professionals.

In addition to discussion of a range of issues contained in the Youth Justice Strategy, the YJGSG and the YJOG are considering the development of more

robust and comprehensive methods for reporting on implementation of the Strategy, supported by the REPPP¹ team (see section 3 below).

A summary chart of Implementation of the Strategy is at Appendix C below.

A new Youth Justice Advisory Group (YJAG) chaired by Minister of State James Browne T.D. was convened to maintain a strong stakeholder input in relation to implementation of the Strategy. The Group met in September and again in December 2021. Issues under discussion by the group include:

- Approaches to collaborative services and wrap-around supports, including for children with multiple needs including
 - Engaging with “Hard-to-reach” children and specialised supports
 - Parent/family support
 - Travellers and other minority communities/groups
 - Disability – accessibility of services and supports
 - Children in Care
 - Children on the fringes – with a potential but unquantified risk in relation to criminal activity.

- Disability and Neuro-Diversity
- Case Management - Minimum intervention and minimising delay
- Transitions to adulthood
- Education and alternative education/training
- Access to appropriate accommodation
- Listening to the Voice of the Child / Young Person
- Covid-19 impact
- Courts Processes.

The intention is that the review of the Children Act 2001, referenced in Key Action 1.7.3 of the Strategy, will be progressed initially through the YJAG in advance of broader consultations.

In addition a REPPP Advisory Group which includes a wide range of academic and expert stakeholders was established to inform the further development of the REPPP research partnership between the Department of Justice and the University of Limerick.

With regard to longer term youth justice structures, referenced in Key Action 1.1.3 of the Strategy, it was noted that these will need to be considered in the

¹ *Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice*

context of a number of other strategic developments which will be pursued over the next year or more, including:

- a new Criminal Justice Sectoral Strategy in 2022
- a new Community Safety Strategy which will be prepared after the enactment of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill 2021
- the development of a successor framework to “Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, the National Policy Framework for Children and Young Adults”, led by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

3 REPPP (Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice) *Strategic Objective 1.2*

To underpin the strong emphasis on evidence-informed development of youth justice programmes, an enhanced research partnership between the Department of Justice and the University of Limerick (REPPP), was established during the year. The REPPP team are supporting a number of cutting-edge and internationally recognised projects as part of a significant work programme, incorporating important action-research and project support, including the Greentown research and pilot projects.

The REPPP team will also support the development of evidence-based monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the objectives contained in the Strategy.

A summary of key elements in the REPPP work programme is attached at Appendix D, for reference.

Executive Leadership Programme

Grappling with ‘Wicked’ problems and complex harms

This is a REPPP initiative which has potential to assist in the delivery of a wide range of youth justice or other social support programmes.

The overarching **aim** of the Executive Leadership Programme is to enhance the capacity of professionals working in, managing, funding, or supporting public purpose organisations, to better understand and tackle complex social problems in their area of work.

Programmes and issues addressed to date

The programme was piloted in Dublin's North East Inner City in 2019 and, since then, there have been a further six programmes. The locations and issues addressed are outlined below.

Dublin, North East Inner City (NEIC):

- Stopping open drug dealing in a specific location
- Improving the effectiveness of community leadership
- Improving working relationships between the statutory sector and community and voluntary bodies

Limerick City and County in association with Limerick Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC):

- Addressing the educational impacts of school refusal and reduced timetables
- Dealing with the effects of excessive staff turnover in child and family services
- Encouraging innovation and flexibility in professional life
- Reducing developmental delay in children in their formative years in homeless accommodation.

Kerry in association with the Kerry Diocesan Youth Services and Kerry CYPSC (Ongoing):

- Enhancing rural connectivity in South West Kerry. This group is currently exploring the concept of 'no wrong door', as outlined in the Youth Justice Strategy, to support young people and families to access appropriate services
- Reducing Information Technology Poverty for older people in South Kerry. A working group developed a proposal which promotes the Department of Justice's Youth Justice Strategy's Strategic Objective 2.1 by developing effective practice in collaborative service delivery and exploring new pilot approaches in conjunction with UL REPPP
- Strengthening connections between professionals in South West Kerry. This group aims to extend and expand integrated working in South West Co. Kerry.

Dublin South Central in association with Dublin City Council and the Building Community Resilience initiative:

- This programme focused on developing a number of integrated responses to criminal networks throughout Dublin South Central

Cork in association with Cork Aftercare Services and Cork CYPSC (Ongoing):

- This programme is currently investigating ways of improving services for those leaving aftercare services in Cork.

Limerick and Galway in association with Tusla Education Support Services (TESS) (Ongoing):

- This programme is currently investigating ways of increasing school attendance, participation and retention in educational settings for marginalised children including Traveller and Roma children. It is also exploring how communications between such groups and wider society can be improved while also supporting emerging ideas with a robust research and evaluation framework.

4 Youth Diversion Project Development *Strategic Objectives 2.8 and 2.9*

As the principal Youth Justice intervention in the community, the development of the existing network of 105 Youth Diversion Projects funded by the Department of Justice is an immediate priority in delivering the Strategy. There was very significant progress in relation to the expansion and deepening of YDP services in 2021.

The Budget announcements for 2022 included an additional €6.7m in Exchequer funding for youth justice services for 2022 - an increase of 40%. It provides the resources to kick-start the further development of the YDPs and a number of related specialised projects and programmes. This includes a priority focus on more problematic offending and development of existing specialised project approaches which adopt a "never-give-up" approach to engaging with those who are hardest for services to reach. The following are the main elements of the YDP development programme:

- Substantial service enhancement supported by an Action Research Project which is led by the REPPP team in the University of Limerick and works directly with local projects to help distil effective practice and interaction with the young people who participate in local projects.
- The geographical coverage of the YDP service will be expanded so that, within approximately two years, it is available to every child in the State who could benefit from it.
- This will be done principally by extending the operating area of existing projects, but a relatively small number of new projects will be required.

- An enhanced YDP service offering will be developed which can be made available where such supports are not already accessible, in particular:
 - Early intervention and family support work
 - Outreach with harder-to-engage young people
 - Appropriate support for schools to retain challenging children.

Other specific initiatives are supported and in 2021 a new community initiative in relation to the misuse of scramblers and similar vehicles was initiated. This allowed Youth Diversion Projects to act as the focal point for local consortiums to develop proposals for community-based interventions to work with young people involved in the anti-social use of these vehicles and related crime and anti-social behaviour.

In 2021, eight such proposals were successful in accessing almost €200,000 in funding. These projects are primarily based in Dublin, where there are seven, with one in Limerick.

Additional specialised programmes

These specialised programme approaches are being pursued to provide a suite of effective, evidence-informed approaches to address more problematic offending behaviour and the complex issues which underlie it. These include:

- **Greentown:** The Greentown initiative is a broad community-based programme to support children, families and communities most affected by criminal networks, and its development is strongly supported by An Garda Síochána. This approach is being implemented on a pilot basis in two locations
- **Bail Supervision Scheme:** Providing availability of the internationally recognised approach to achieving bail compliance, supported by the REPPP (UL) partnership. The service is being expanded beyond the initial pilot in Dublin to Cork and Limerick.
- **Y-JARC:** An evaluation of the Y-JARC pilots was nearing completion at the end of 2021.
- **Young Persons Probation:** Young Persons Probation Projects (YPP) provide community-based supports for young people under the supervision of the Probation Service. (See further details in section 5 below relating to Key Action 1.9.3)

5 Youth Justice Strategy - Ongoing Service Development Objectives

In this first year of implementation of the Strategy the work of important existing programmes continued and these are covered by the Ongoing Service Development Objectives which are listed on page 43 of the Strategy. These relate primarily to the work of An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service, and the operation of Oberstown Children Detention Campus. Information on the ongoing implementation of these Objectives is given below.

Probation Service Support for young people

1.9.3 - We will continue to support and resource the deployment of suitably qualified Probation Officers to engage effectively with children and young people

Probation Service

The Probation Service works within the framework of the Youth Justice Strategy 2021- 2027 to maximise opportunities to promote positive behavioural change through the development and delivery of opportunities for vulnerable children at risk or already engaged in the Criminal Justice System.

Young Person Probation (YPP) is an Operational Region of the Probation Service with a national footprint, established to fulfil the statutory obligation of the Children's Act 2001, and in particular the 10 community sanctions set out in the legislation. The YPP Region is resourced by four dedicated YPP teams, located in areas identified as best supporting the demands and needs for our work with children – Dublin North, Dublin South, Limerick/Clare and Cork. Additionally, each of the community-based teams across the country have a dedicated Probation Officer focusing on young persons as part of the overall team workload. YPP work with circa 500 children and young people on an annual basis.

Continuous professional development and professional staff supervision are central to supporting Probation Officers discharge their duties and overall governance of the work.

Probation Service YPP Core work - Assessment and Supervision of children and young people

The work of YPP generally comes through the Children Court (District Court level). In recent years, there has been an increase in young people before the Circuit and Criminal Courts.

Once referrals are received from the Courts, the Probation Officer builds a relationship with the child and with their family/ primary caregivers. The Probation Officer consults with other key agencies including the child's education provider and, where relevant, Tusla.

Addiction Support and mental health services

Probation Officers use a child-centred approach, focusing on the ability of the child to change and to make better choices. The Probation Officer analyses the child's offending behaviour in the context of their offending, while identifying risk factors for further offending by applying the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI). This is a specific tool, used across the Youth Justice system, to assess risk, needs and gauge appropriate levels of intervention.

In keeping with the ethos of the Children Act 2001, every child/young person that the Probation Service work with is afforded the opportunity for engagement at the lowest level of intervention possible to keep them and the community safe. Probation Officers supervise young people as directed by the courts, including making referrals to appropriate services to help address their risks and needs.

2020 Activity

In 2020,

- 519 court referrals were made to the Probation Service for young people².
- 509 detailed Pre-sanction Reports were prepared by the Probation Service for the courts.³
- 409 young people were supervised by the Probation Service in the community.⁴

Probation Service support for Diversion measures

The Probation Service supports young persons and their families in their own communities, whilst at the same time holding them to account to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour and the consequences of it. The Service funds sixteen Community Based Organisations (Budget €5 million) that work directly with young people. Probation Officers make direct referrals to these Community Based Organisations (CBO's) and services include education and training, respite, counselling, mentoring and outdoor pursuits. Annually,

² Source- Latest Probation Service Published figures, Annual Report 2020

³ Source- Latest Probation Service Published figures, Annual Report 2020

⁴ Source- Latest Probation Service Published figures, Annual Report 2020

approximately 400 young people avail of support from Probation Funded CBO's.⁵

The Probation Service has strong links with the Garda Youth Diversion Programme, working closely with Juvenile Liaison Officers and Garda Youth Crime Case Managers. Probation Officers have ongoing engagement with Youth Diversion Projects funded by the Department of Justice. A number of Probation Service funded CBO's and YDP's work collaboratively, at times accepting referrals from one to the other, on a case by case basis, where it is the view that the needs of a particular service user may be more appropriately met by the alternate project.

The Probation Service assisted the expansion of the Bail Supervision Scheme to Limerick and Cork and make direct referrals or can recommend other agencies make referrals to Bail Supervision, where appropriate.

Detention and support post release

As part of its work, the Service provides an in-reach service to Oberstown Children Detention Campus two days per week. This Probation staff member co-facilitates offence-focused programmes with young people in detention as well as completing individual work with children in Detention.

The Probation Service and Oberstown have an agreed protocol, specific to Probation Officers and staff in Oberstown to ensure the effective management and through care of children and young persons.

In 2020, 21 young people received a Detention and Supervision Order⁶. The Probation Service worked with each of these young people both while in detention and post release.

Probation staff attend organised Placement Planning meetings at Oberstown Children Detention Campus throughout the young person's detention there. Probation Officers support each young person's return to the community in a planned, safe and, where possible, seamless manner. The young person's progress is reviewed on an ongoing basis while in detention and a final review is conducted prior to release. Together, the Probation Officer and Oberstown identify any suitable services required for young people returning to the community, make referrals, and address any other outstanding matters. The Probation Officer progresses areas of responsibility assigned to the Probation

⁵ Source- Annual Reports of Probation Service funded CBO's

⁶ Source- Latest Probation Service Published figures, Annual Report 2020

Service as well as engaging with the family and community supports, as appropriate and necessary.

Additionally, in line with the ethos of the Children Act 2001, Oberstown and Probation Service proactively identify any young people in detention who may benefit from an early return to the community. A number of young people benefited from early return in 2020.

YPP Specialist Support:

1. Work with young people who have sexually harmed

Currently, three Probation Officers are seconded one day per week to work with National Inter Agency Prevention Programme (NIAPP). These Probation Officers' co-facilitate treatment programmes with NIAPP for young people who have exhibited sexually harmful behaviour or sexually offended.

2. Restorative Justice:

Restorative Conferencing: In instances where the Court orders a Restorative Conference, a restorative approach or where there is a restorative element to the case report, the Probation Officer usually develops a bespoke plan with the child, family and relevant parties. The progress/outcome is reported to the court in the Pre-sanction Report and recommendations can be made to the court, if appropriate.

Family Conferencing: YPP facilitated a number of Family Conferences in 2020. A Family Conference is a court ordered meeting with the child charged with the offence, members of the child's family, the victim(s) and other relevant people. This meeting aims to develop a plan to assist the child to acknowledge responsibility, address any harm caused and engage in positive behaviour in the future. The plan, if agreed by the Court, is supervised by the Probation Service.

Training for Youth Diversion Projects

1.9.4 - *We will continue to support the provision of training for Youth Justice Workers to support them to engage effectively with the children and young people they work with. DoJ.*

Training was provided through the YDP Best Practice Development Team (BPDT) and the REPPP Action Research Project to Youth Justice Workers in 2021.

BPDT Training

The BPDT comprises of four experienced Youth Justice Workers (YJWs) drawn from different community based organisations (CBOs) who work collectively to support staff in the nationwide network of Youth Diversion Projects.

Restorative practice

- Six (4 day) trainings have been fully completed in 2021 with 94 Youth Justice Workers (YJWs). This has resulted in at least one person from 50 YDPs being trained.

YLS/CMI 2.0 (Risk Assessment Tool)

- Four 'YLS screening version' trainings took place with 47 YJWs attending.
- There were three 'YLS/CMI 2.0' trainings in which 28 YJWs went on to complete.
- Six CBO line managers attended a one-day YLS/CMI 2.0 workshop.
- There were thirteen communities of practice in May which all YJWs attended and thirteen Communities of Practice in November which all YJWs attended.

Outcomes focused planning design Workshops (Logic Model)

- Four workshops took place in 2021, with 64 YJWs attending

Motivational Interviewing

- Two introduction level (2 day) trainings took place with 24 YJWs attending.
- Two Intermediate level (2 day) trainings took place with 24 YJWs attending.
- Two Skills development (1 Day) Trainings took place with 20 YJWs attending.

Exploring Anger Workshops

- Four Exploring Anger half day, workshops took place, with 64 YJWs attending.

Together Stronger (for YJWs and Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers – JLOs)

- Four half day workshops took place.
- 20 projects (45 YJWs and 20 JLOs) attended.

REPPP Action Research Project

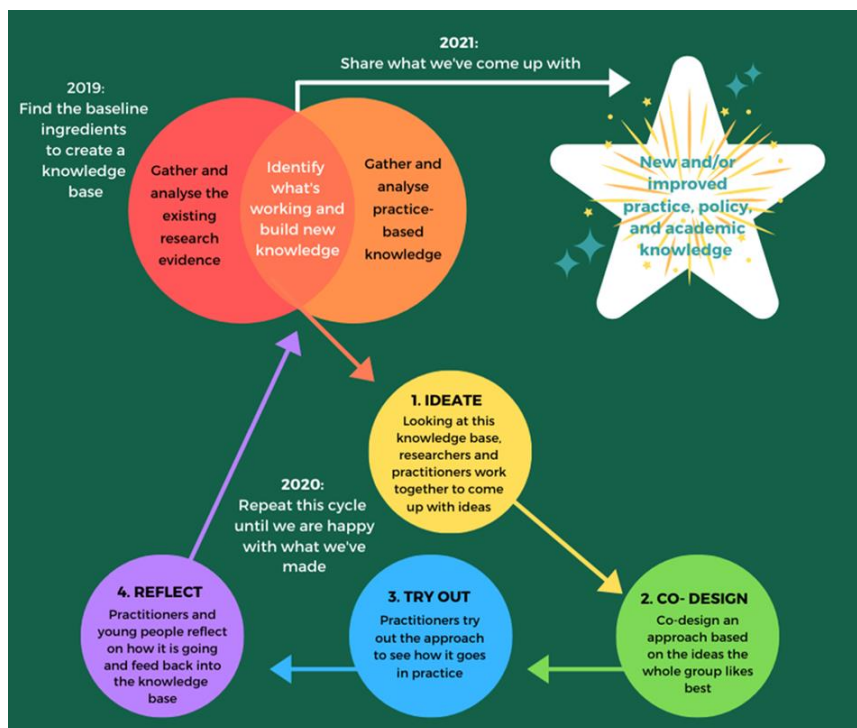
The action research project aimed to co-design and implement new guidance on effective practitioner and young person relationships in Youth Diversion

Projects (YDPs). This has been done using 16 YDP sites nationwide and involving them in a trial process over 2 years. This action research process is outlined in Figure 1. To begin with, a review of the international research evidence on what constitutes effective relationships in youth justice settings was conducted by REPPP (see Fullerton et al. 2021)⁷.

This was done in tandem with the gathering of practitioners craft knowledge on what currently works well in YDP practitioner relationships. This work established guidance that was then trialled in the 16 sites using action research to test effectiveness and adapt if necessary.

The project gathered additional evidence from speaking with young people on the 'soft' or proximal outcomes that they attribute to an effective relationship. The project also involved practitioners conducting local implementation evaluations on the process to capture the experience and identify barriers and enablers to implementation.

The Action Research Project is working towards co-designing recommendations for implementation and dissemination throughout the YDP network, countrywide. These recommendations are both based on the research findings and additional practitioner input.



⁷ "Developing Effective Relationships Between Youth Justice Workers and Young People" http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Developing_Effective_Relationships.pdf/Files/Developing_Effective_Relationships.pdf

**Figure 1. The REPPP action research process undertaken with YDP
Garda Diversion Programme - Development and Practice (3 Objectives)**

2.4.1 - An Garda Síochána will mandate a strong central resource within An Garda Síochána, to:

- a) Oversee the operation of the Garda Diversion Programme*
- b) design Garda policies and procedures for Diversion of children and young people from offending*
- c) inform Garda practice and procedures to incentivise, as far as possible, positive interaction between Gardaí and young people*
- d) drive the design of Garda training and best practices, on age appropriate interaction with children and young people, including the use of general policing powers, and with regard to disadvantage and diversity issues people, including in relation to Schools Programmes and Community Policing generally.*
- e) guide the ongoing development of community initiatives such as the Garda Schools Programmes and Community Policing generally.*

2.5.1 - An Garda Síochána will implement the recommendations arising from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report, and equip the Garda National Bureau of Youth Diversion to ensure:

- a) efficient decision making on cases referred to it*
- b) ready access to specialist legal or other professional resources*
- c) access to appropriate IT or other technical supports*
- d) consistent application of decision making policies*
- e) transparent decision making and communication with those who are the subject of referral for Diversion.*

2.7.1 - Ensure centralised Garda oversight of cases and that all appropriate actions are taken to a conclusion, in line with procedures, including implementation of the recommendations from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report.

2021 Implementation by An Garda Síochána

Dedicated governance structures are in place for the operation of the Garda Youth Diversion Bureau, (GYDB) and activity under the Diversion Programme is detailed in the reports of the Monitoring Committee appointed under Section 44 of the Children Act 2001.

The GYDB provides a central office which considers the applicability of Diversion measures for all youth crime incidents, operating in accordance with Part 4 of the Children Act 2001. Decisions on whether or not to admit a child or young person to the Diversion Programme are made by the Director, who

is a Superintendent within the GYDB. Over 14,000 crime incidents were processed by the GYDB in 2021.

Implementation of Objectives 2.4.1, 2.5.1, and 2.7.1, is supported by practice guidelines developed by the GYDB which cover various aspects of the assessment, monitoring and processing of cases which are referred for consideration for admission to the Diversion Programme, as well as key functions such as the administration of cautions and supervision by Juvenile Liaison Officers.

A range of initiatives by the GYDB were conducted / were ongoing in 2021 including:

- A new youth mental health first-aid course for Juvenile Liaison Officers and GYDB personnel as well as community and other front-line Gardai.
- Delivery of presentations on Diversion work to Sergeant promotion courses and frontline personnel, Inspectors, Superintendents and PAF (Performance and Accountability Framework) Administrators.
- Presentations on Restorative Justice and Youth Crime to external groups including Joint Policing Committees and IBEC
- Continuing support of the Greentown pilot initiatives (Yellowtown and Whitetown) supporting children who are under the coercive influence of criminal groups
- Engagement with Tusla and "Quality Matters" to develop a Trauma-informed Care Pilot Project for child residential units
- Engagement with REPPP team in relation to "Developing Effective Relationships" report and RTE Change Makers TV Programme.

To support collaborative implementation of the Objectives in the Youth Justice Strategy within An Garda Síochána, a working group was established, chaired by Chief Superintendent Colette Quinn, GYDB. Representatives from the following areas of the Garda organisation are included in the working group:

- Regional Assistant Commissioner's representatives
- Director of Training, Garda College
- Crime Legal Section
- Strategic Transformation Office
- Specialist Sections (Organised and Serious Crime)
- Representatives from frontline units at Inspector/Superintendent level
- Roads Policing and Community Engagement

An Garda Síochána continues to implement recommendations from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report and meet service development

objectives to support efficient and transparent decision-making with regard to the Youth Diversion Programme, and further develop community initiatives to encourage positive interaction between Gardaí and young people.

Detention – DCEDIY/Oberstown

2.11.2 - We will continue to build on the existing Oberstown Children's Rights Framework to describe for each individual case, intended outcomes, the services/support required to help achieve those outcomes and the methodology for measuring what is achieved, from a period in Detention and from Post-Detention support.

Actions taken in 2021:

The necessary Policy and Procedure Documents to compliment the Children's Rights Policy Framework (incorporating the Rules) to assist in its consistent implementation have been finalised and staff have completed the necessary training. The delivery of the Framework is through the CEHOP Model of care which exists on the Campus – (Care, Education, Health & Wellbeing, Offending Behaviour and Preparation for Leaving).

2.13.1 – In relation to transitions from Oberstown to the prison system, we will build on existing procedures and practices and assess any gaps, including with regard to appropriate continuity of work done in Oberstown, and develop appropriate recommendations and measures to address these.

Actions taken in 2021:

Transitions to prison currently forms part of the Placement Planning Process involving young people in consultation with their keyworker and an external partner, Solas. This multi-disciplinary approach highlights the journey of the young person while in Oberstown with a view to continuing this in the prison service. From a strategic perspective there is a requirement to put the current process on a more formal basis.

Appendix A

Membership of the Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Group

Organisation	Name of Member
The Department of Justice	Ben Ryan, Assistant Secretary (Chair) Deaglán Ó Briain, Principal Officer Brendan Sheehy, Assistant Principal Aideen Clery, Higher Executive Officer (Secretary)
An Garda Síochána	Paula Hilman, Assistant Commissioner
Tusla	Cormac Quinlan, Director of Transformation & Policy
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	Conor Rowley, Assistant Secretary Tony O'Donovan, Principal Officer
Department of Education	Martina Mannion, Assistant Secretary General
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Science and Innovation	Enda Hughes, Principal Officer
Department of Health	Jim Walsh, Principal Officer
Irish Prison Service	Caron McCaffrey, Director General
Oberstown Detention Campus	Damien Hernon, Director
Probation Service	Mark Wilson, Director
REPPP	Dr. Seán Redmond

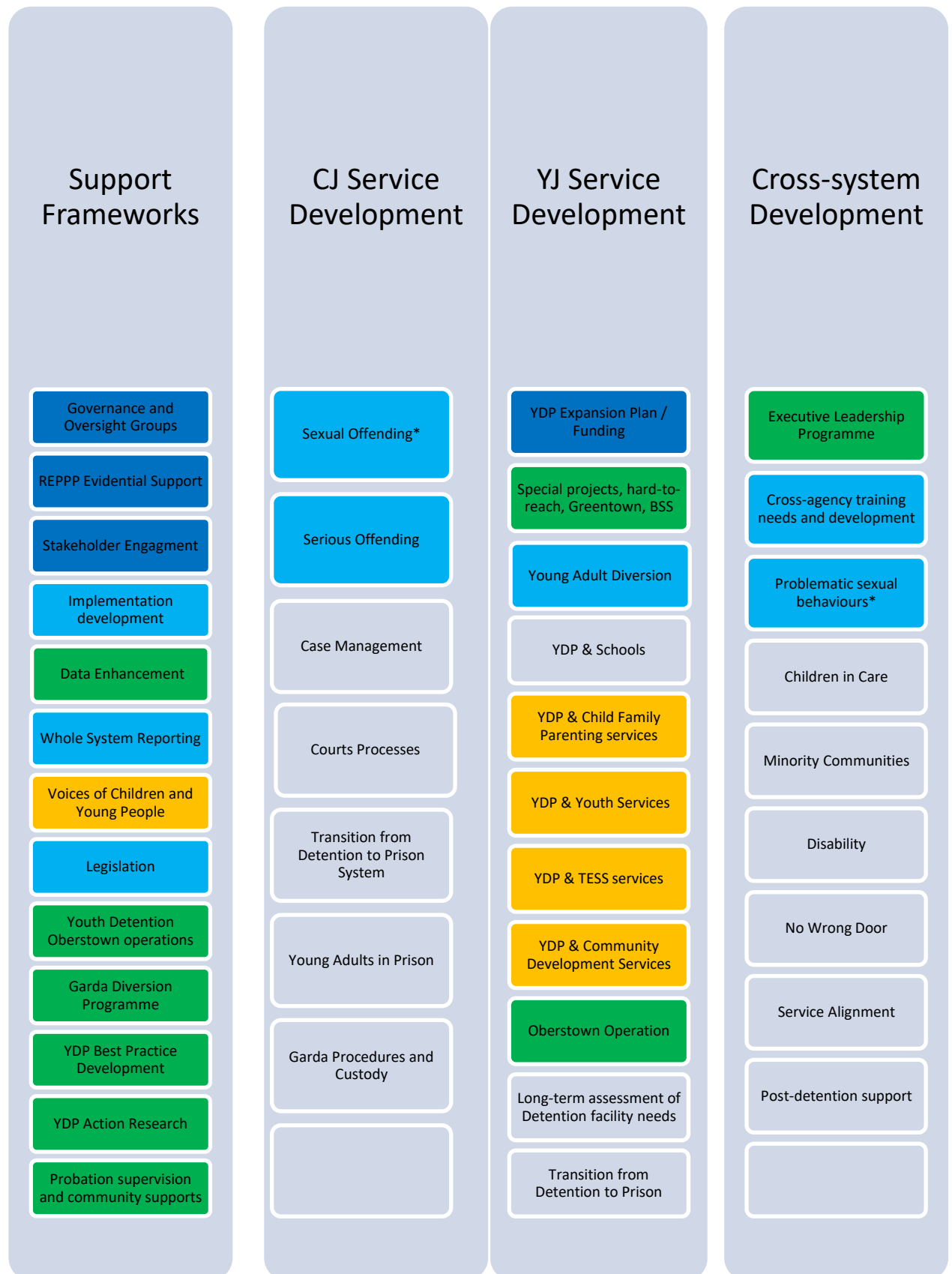
Appendix B

Membership of the Youth Justice Oversight Group

Organisation	Name of Member
Department of Justice	Deaglán O Briain (Chair) Tony O'Donovan Brendan Sheehy Sinéad Murphy (Secretary)
An Garda Síochána	Ch. Supt Colette Quinn
Irish Prison Service	Andrew Brennan
Probation Service	Una Doyle
Tusla	Colette McLoughlin
Tusla Education Support Service	Aine O'Keeffe
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	Tony O'Donovan (Detention)& Bridget Wilson
Oberstown	Damien Hernon
HSE	Gerry McCarney
Department of Rural and Community Development	Lisa Keveny
REPPP	Dr. Seán Redmond

Appendix C

Youth Justice Strategy Summary of Implementation in 2021



Appendix D

Summary of REPPP Work Programme, 2021-2023.

Background

The Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice (REPPP) project is based on a strategic relationship between the Department of Justice and the School of Law, University of Limerick, to improve the quality of evidence informed policy in the area of youth crime. The REPPP mission is to support the youth justice system in Ireland to make rational evidence informed judgments regarding youth justice reform and development.

The REPPP work programme takes as its main points of reference, the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 and "Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures - The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020" which inter-alia assume an increasing demand for evidence informed approaches from top to bottom, to achieve deep reform for children, young people and communities.

This three-year (2021-2023) work plan will focus on the below policy-significant areas;

- **Greentown**
 - Support the establishment of two trial sites and work with Greentown programme providers to establish a local multi-agency committee. (year 1)
 - Provide a detailed examination in each location of the activities of the local criminal network(s). (year 1)
 - Provide ongoing scientific support and advice to the service provider and multi-agency committee (year 1)
 - Establish and support Greentown reference group (years 1-3)
 - Conduct two site based implementation evaluations and two site based outcome/impact evaluations (year 3)
 - Prepare end of trial 'Scaling Learnings' report (year 3)
 - Support additional trial/roll out as required (year 3)

- **Bail Supervision Scheme**
 - Support DoJ in the establishment of two extension sites (year 1)
 - Provide on-going scientific support and advice to the service provider and local multi-agency committee (years 1-3)
 - Conduct two site based implementation evaluations and two site based outcome/impact evaluations (year 3)
 - Document Irish Bail Supervision model (year 3)
 - Prepare 'Scaling Learnings' report for full programme (year 3)
 - Support additional trial / roll out as required (year 3)

- **Youth Diversion Projects (YDPs)**
 - This programme will support a joint approach by the REPPP Action Research project team and Best Practice Development Team to developing further capacity in YDPs.
 - Direct support for the operations of the action research project in 14 YDP sites (year 1)
 - Publish Evidence Synthesis: *Developing Effective Relationships Between Youth Justice Workers and Young People* (year 1)
 - Publish report on Evidence Synthesis / practitioner co-design 'Effective Relationships in Youth Justice Settings in Ireland (year 1)
 - Development and direct support of dissemination/ programme – wide engagement strategy (years 1-3)
 - Conduct two site based implementation evaluations and two site based outcome/impact evaluation of ARP programme (years 2-3)
 - Prepare 'Scaling Learnings' report for full programme (year 1-2)

- **Executive Leadership Programme**
 - Deliver 6 programmes (year 1)
 - Review the value added and effectiveness of the programme – report (year 1)
 - Review potential extension of the programme from youth justice settings to place based solutions (year 1)
 - Integrate programme as full module into UL core teaching at Masters level (year 2)
 - Develop and deliver new work programme for dealing with 'wicked/complex' problem including the Executive Leadership Programme (years 2-3)

- **Development of better data collection and analysis practices in the Youth Justice system**
 - Examine findings of comparative study on data collection and focussed Irish study and produce implementation report (year 1)
 - Contribute to the ongoing development of the DoJ data hub (years 1-3)
 - Develop a protocol agreement to regularise data sharing arrangements with An Garda Síochána Analysis Service, Garda National Bureau of Youth Diversion, Probation Service, Tusla and Criminal Justice Policy/Community Safety Unit in DoJ.

- **Place-Based Strategies – ‘No Wrong Door’ for children and young people in need**
 - Advise and support the development of integrated plans for the delivery of co-ordinated targeted services for young people and their families aged 8-24 (years 2-3).
 - Design impact evaluation framework and implementation evaluation framework for trial of integrated plans for delivery of co-ordinated targeted services for young people and their families aged 8-24.

- **Supporting Implementation**
 - Logic Model / Theory of Change for the Implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy (year 1)
 - Develop a governance plan and monitoring system for implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy to support the work of Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Group, linking high level policy commitments with day to day operations (year 1)
 - Annual Youth Justice Strategy implementation reports (years 2-3)
 - Report on Indirect cost recovery and performance measures for indirect cost support for NGO service providers in YDPs (years 1-2)
 - Report on reducing the gap, improving feedback loops, between front line professionals /service users and policy principals to improve effectiveness of programme governance (year 2)
 - Report on reviewing the effectiveness of DoJ service agreements with service providers (year 2)
 - Study on the implementation of national YDP policy objectives at practice level (years 2-3)

- **Knowledge development**
 - REPPP will collaborate with third level institutions to increase the range and quality of practically focussed youth justice research, facilitating institutions to develop their portfolios / research specialisms and to collaborate on larger or complex projects within a shared policy focus.
 - In collaboration with the School of Law UL and Best Practice Development Team (BPDT), REPPP will undertake a mapping exercise of training needs for actors identified in the youth Justice strategy at policy, programme and practice levels (year 1)

- Development of accessible and practical implementation and outcome and impact research methodologies, frameworks and tools (year 2).
- Development of a Master's Programme which focuses on practical utilisation of evidence and dealing with wicked and complex problems for policy makers, programme designers and practitioners in human services (year 3)