

**Newcastle Youth Offending Team  
YOT Partnership Board  
Terms of Reference**

**Purpose and remit**

The principle aim of the youth justice system established by Section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) is to prevent offending by children and young people. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) were identified as one of the main vehicles by which this principle aim would be delivered.

In 1998 guidance outlined the statutory responsibility for local areas to establish a steering group for the YOT. The initial function of the Newcastle management board was to oversee the establishment of the YOT. In order to build on this and ensure that supporting arrangements are sufficiently robust and flexible to respond to local priorities but also to the public service performance agenda emerging from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and central Government, the management board needs to ensure the following responsibilities are addressed.

Links to relevant guidance for structure and operation of Youth Offending Teams' management boards are in appendix A.

**Accountability**

The YOT Partnership Board is accountable to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales for the provision of youth justice services within Newcastle and for the preparation and delivery of an annual Youth Justice Plan and services.

The Board is linked to all key local partnerships and this linkage is regularly reviewed to take account of change over time. The current network of linkages is identified at Appendix 1.

**Functions**

The board will:

- Approve the Youth Justice Plan
- Oversee the YOTs business planning process including the Youth Justice Plan and the commissioning of local services.
- Ensure that the YOT is adequately resourced with contributions by all partner agencies in order to deliver effective services and address infrastructure needs.
- Facilitate the development of an appropriately qualified staff group ensuring access to appropriate training and development opportunities to address any competence deficits identified through the YJB effective practice quality audits.

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- Ensure that a significant proportion of total staff from the five statutory agencies remain in the YOT to form a core staff group and in addition, seconded staff are rotated from time to time, providing access to up to date expertise.
- Actively monitor YOT performance against YJB Performance Summary and Effective Practice Quality Assurance targets, as well as locally agreed targets or targets set by the Local Criminal Justice Board and take corrective action in response to underperformance.
- Integrate the YOT performance system with those applying to local Criminal Justice Boards, Community Safety and Children's Services, anticipating its contribution to the comprehensive performance assessment.
- Actively ensure that young people the YOT works with have access mainstream services.

### **Communication**

The board requires clear lines of communication with other inter-agency structures to support it in reducing youth offending:

- Safe Newcastle Partnership.
- Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Local Criminal Justice Board.
- Children's Fund.
- Sure Start Partnerships.
- Children's Trusts.
- Connexions Partnership.
- Probation Board.

With the complexity this level of activity creates, members of the YOT Partnership Board will represent the YOTs issues in these groups to ensure that they contribute to preventing youth crime.

To support this process, the Board will develop a Communication Strategy.

### **Board membership**

The Board will:

- Comprise all statutory partners and other agencies that can make a significant contribution to the youth crime prevention agenda.
- Ensure that board members are at chief officer level or representatives with sufficient seniority to be able to commit resources and take necessary decisions in relation to the approval of the Youth Justice Plan.
- Ensure corporate ownership of the YOT and the youth crime prevention agenda.

In line with recommendations in 'Sustaining the Success' and local needs other board members should be drawn from the following organisations:

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- Education
- Police
- Children's Services
- Health
- Youth Court Bench
- Magistrates' Court
- Elected Members
- Housing
- Connexions
- Youth Service
- Others as identified as appropriate

Each member should have a nominated deputy within their agency. Current board members and contact details for are attached at Appendix B.

### **Chairing arrangements**

The chairing of the board is delegated by the Chief Executive of the local authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services. The vice chair of the management board is the Board member representing Northumbria Police.

The Chair will be responsible for:

- Managing and distributing Board papers in advance of the next meeting
- Reviewing the progress against actions agreed at the previous meeting
- Ensuring that incomplete or ongoing actions are carried forward to the next meeting
- Introducing the agenda
- Facilitating meetings
- Ensuring meetings are solution focused and that actions are specified and recorded keeping to time.

### **Business Agenda**

The board will influence the following:

- The YOTs understanding and interpretation of performance targets
- Practice development and performance improvement
- The development of induction and training opportunities
- Effective joint working and strategic partnerships
- Effective monitoring and evaluation arrangements

The following items will be standing items for the board:

- YOT Manager's Report
- YOT performance on the YJB performance framework
- YOT Practice and Performance group reports

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All Board members are responsible for submitting agenda items to the board at least 3 weeks in advance of the next board meeting.

The Executive Director of Children's Services office will be responsible for circulating the final agenda and papers one week in advance of the next meeting.

### **Apologies**

Board members are asked to notify the Executive Director of Children's Services office of any attendance difficulties in advance of meetings to ensure that apologies can be expressed to other members.

Apologies can be given via the following agreed methods:

- By e-mail
- In person.
- Via another Board member.

### **Meeting Dates, Frequency and Venue**

The Board will meet quarterly and be timed to consider the YOTs performance and enable partners to report to other relevant forums.

Board meetings will commence promptly. Participants are reminded of the need to be punctual to ensure effective use of time.

The Board dates will be agreed on a 12 month basis and are as follows:

7th June 2006	2.00 – 4.00
27th September 2006	2.00 – 4.00
8 <sup>th</sup> November 2006	2.00 – 5.00 (Budget meeting only)
6th December 2006	2.00 – 4.00
March 2007	to be confirmed

The venue for meetings will be agreed and booked in advance for a 12 month period.

### **Minutes**

Minutes will be taken by a member of the Executive Director of Children's Services office.

The minute taker will be responsible for accurately recording:

- The date of the meeting
- Name of the minute taker
- Board members in *Attendance* and *Apologies*
- That previous minutes have been read, discussed and amended as appropriate

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- All agenda items
- All agreed actions, Board member responsible for the action and the agreed action completion date
- Date of the next meeting

All minutes will be typed-up and distributed to the Board.

### **Effective Communication**

In the period between meetings, Board members are encouraged to communicate with each other to share emerging issues.

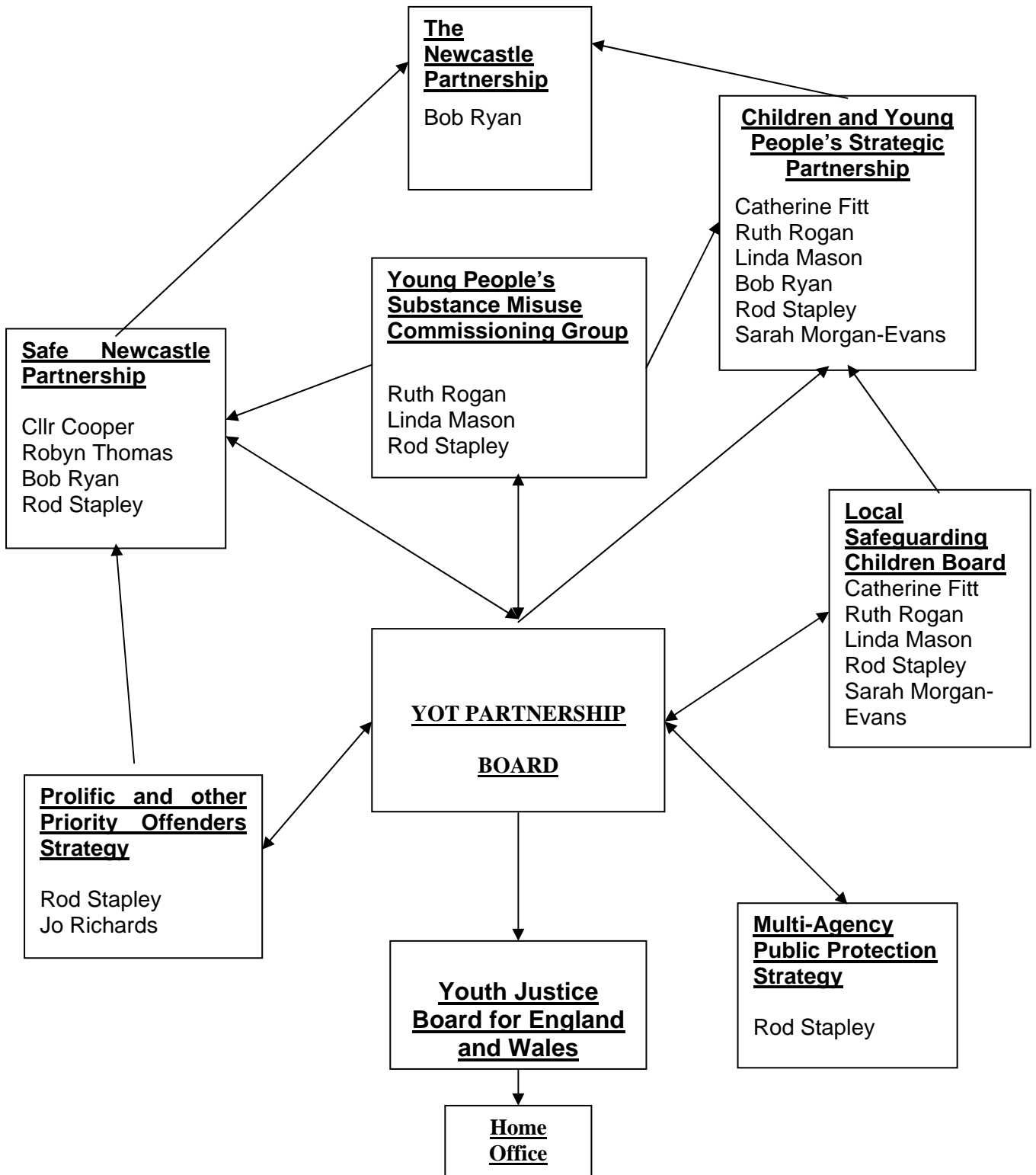
It is the collective responsibility of all members to ensure that decisions made and actions taken within the confines of the group are effectively communicated to relevant parties.

### **Terms of Reference Review**

The Terms of Reference should be a working document and updated regularly to reflect the practical working and learning of the Board.

The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Terms of Reference are enforced and reviewed on a regular basis and no later than 6 months after they are agreed by the Board.

**Appendix 1: YOT Partnership Board Strategic Linkages**



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### **Appendix 2: Links to relevant guidance for structure and operation of Youth Offending Teams' Management boards**

1. Interdepartmental guidance "Establishing Youth Offending Teams" (December 1998)

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/YOTcirc2.html#ANNEX%20A>

2. Youth Justice Board guidance "Sustaining the Success" (October 2004)

<http://www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk/Publications/Downloads/Sustaining%20the%20Success.pdf>

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**Appendix 3: Current Membership of Newcastle YOT management board**

Organisation	Representative	Position	Contact details (e-mail)
Newcastle City Council	Catherine Fitt	Executive Director of Children's Services	catherine.fitt@newcastle.gov.uk
Newcastle City Council	Gareth Cooper	Council Member	gareth.cooper@newcastle.gov.uk
Newcastle City Council	Chris Boyle	Council Member	chris.boyle@newcastle.gov.uk
Newcastle City Council	Dipu Ahad	Council Member	dipu.ahad@newcastle.gov.uk
Northumbria Police	Bob Ryan	Chief Inspector	robert.ryan.7268@northumbria.pnn.police.uk
Northumbria Probation	Jan Kelly	District Manager	Jan.kelly@northumbria.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Newcastle Public Health	Dr Malathi Natarajan	Locum Consultant	malathi.natarajan@newcastle-pct.nhs.uk
Children's Services Directorate	Ruth Rogan	Acting Head of Children and Young People in the Community	ruth.rogan@newcastle.gov.uk
Children's Services Directorate	Karen Simmons	Acting Head of Children's Services	Karen.simmons@newcastle.gov.uk
Education Directorate	Linda Mason	Head of Early Intervention and Pupil Support	linda.mason@newcastle.gov.uk
Newcastle Magistrates	Jem Lawson	Youth Panel Chair	
Newcastle Magistrates' Clerks	Ian Coffer	Principal Youth Court Clerk	ian.coffer@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk
Safe Newcastle Partnership	Robyn Thomas	Community Safety Manager	robyn.thomas@newcastle.gov.uk
Strategic Housing	Neil Munslow	Housing Services Manager	neil.munslow@newcastle.gov.uk