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Response to **Proposal to reduce the Youth Justice Board's expenditure in 2015/16**

Issued by **The Youth Justice Board**

Link to consultation https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/456168/YJB_consultation.pdf

This response was submitted on a form provided by the YJB which is below.

**Proposal to reduce the Youth Justice Board's expenditure in 2015/16:
Consultation response form**

Question 1a

To what extent do you agree with the YJB's proposal to meet the requirement for savings of £13.5m from the 2015/16 YJB budget through a reduction of £9.0m (10.6%) to the Youth Justice Grant and £4.5m savings from other areas of expenditure, as set out in Chapter 3?

Please tick one box below.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
		X			

Please provide reasons for your response.

The proposals detailed in the consultation paper are realistic. However the Youth Court Committee of the Magistrates' Association is very disappointed that these cuts are required. Those working within the youth justice system have been very successful in reducing the numbers of young people in custody and reducing the numbers of first-time entrants to the youth justice system and we are concerned that these proposed savings could have a detrimental effect upon those achievements.

The Magistrates' Association greatly values the work of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). It is important that when magistrates sentence youth offenders they can be confident that the YOTs are able to ensure the necessary provision to prevent offending by children and young persons and to have regard to the welfare of the young person. The MA would have serious concerns should the proposed cuts compromise the provision of these services.

Question 1b

If you disagree with the YJB’s proposal, what would you propose as alternative means for the YJB to meet the requirement for savings from the 2015/16 YJB budget?

N/A

Question 2a

To what extent do you agree with the YJB’s proposed methodology for the £9.0m reduction in Youth Justice Grant (reducing individual YOTs’ 2015/16 grant by the same proportions as that used this year to calculate their grant)?

Please tick one box below.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don’t know
		X			

Please provide reasons for your response.

No comment from the Magistrates’ Association

Question 2b

If you disagree, how would you apportion the £9.0m reduction in Youth Justice Grant?

N/A

Question 3

(For YOT respondents) What would be the anticipated impact on your performance if the YJB reduced your grant as proposed?

In particular please outline the impact on:

- a. First-time entrants
- b. Reoffending
- c. Custody
- d. Safeguarding
- e. Public protection.

The YJB will use the information provided to assess the impact of its proposal on critical aspects of the youth justice system and to inform its decision making and its future monitoring.

No comment from the Magistrates’ Association

Question 4

If the YJB were to reduce the allocation of Youth Justice Grant, how can it help YOTs implement those savings and minimise any possible disruption to their work?

The YJB will use the information provided to identify any action it can take to minimise any negative impact of its proposal.

No comment from the Magistrates' Association

Question 5

If the YJB were to reduce the Youth Justice Grant allocation by £9.0m (10.6%), what would the likely impact be on those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010?

The YJB will also need to consider how people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be affected by any decision it reaches, pursuant to its public sector equality duty.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

No comment from the Magistrates' Association

Other information

Please provide any other information that you believe the YJB should consider.

The MA would be concerned if a reduced provision of the secure estate meant that young people were placed further away from their families and support networks.

It is essential that magistrates have full, relevant information about a young person in order to sentence appropriately. YOTs are vital in providing that information. If cuts to YOTs would compromise this service, the MA would have serious concerns about the effect on the courts' ability to have confidence in YOT recommendations. Magistrates have at their disposal Section 9 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969. This empowers the court to order reports that would provide the court "*with [such] information relating to the home surroundings, school record, health and character of the person...*" Relying on such powers on a regular basis would be a retrograde step and would inevitably result in delays to sentencing and thus to delays in justice.