

**YOS**  
**AssetPlus Guidance for Practitioners**

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Unlike the previous Asset guidance this document is derived wholly from the comprehensive AssetPlus Guidance version 3.0. and hopefully gives YOS practitioners an easy reference point to understand how the AssetPlus framework operates and how practically practitioners work through AssetPlus from the Information gathering and analysis required within the relevant modules and how this is then translated into the Intervention Plan and subsequent expectations of practitioners and counter-signing managers regarding reviewing information and the plan according to either timescales or if the circumstances of the young person change significantly. The full guidance is embedded within this document (below) and should be referred to if practitioners require more detailed information.

See: [AssetPlus: assessment and planning in the youth justice system](#)

Compulsory areas in AssetPlus	Areas in AssetPlus for local discretion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening tools in the personal, family and social factors section of Information Gathering:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Mental and physical health screening questions</i></li> <li>○ <i>Speech, language, communication and neuro-disability screening tool</i></li> <li>○ <i>Alcohol screening tool</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Young person and parent / carer, self assessment questionnaires</li> <li>• Pathways and Planning</li> <li>• Restorative Justice module</li> <li>• Bail and Remand, Custody and Leaving Custody modules (when applicable)</li> <li>• Transfer modules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Sentence Report</li> <li>• Referral Order Panel Report</li> <li>• Referral module</li> <li>• The use of AssetPlus for triage and prevention cases</li> </ul>

## 1. Assessment

### 1.1 Key Tasks in Assessment

Within the specific context of youth justice, the key tasks in assessment are:

- **Collating information from a range of sources** - Information should be collated, and verified, from a range of cross-referenced sources in order to inform the assessment and enable practitioners to understand the young person's behaviours and circumstances. Sources should include the young

person, their parents / carers and other relevant agencies such as children's services, health, social care and education providers.

- **Recording information** - Records should be clear and consistent to enable information to be accessed quickly and to promote accountability within the organisation.
- **Analysing information** - Assessment must go beyond merely describing facts in order to move towards an understanding of a young person's situation and the reasons for their offending/anti-social behaviour. Analysis will also inform judgements about likely future behaviours, risks and concerns regarding a young person's safety and well-being.
- **Judging and / or predicting future behaviours** - The gathered and verified information should be used to understand and explain the young person's behaviour and judge the likelihood and impact of future criminality, future harmful behaviours and potential adverse outcomes for a young person's safety and well-being. These judgements and predictions include statistical information about the likelihood of certain behaviours occurring, e.g. reconviction. Descriptions of the behaviours and adverse outcomes in terms of what might happen, when, who may be affected and imminence of adverse outcomes or behaviours are also produced.
- **Presenting conclusions** - The results of assessments need to be formally presented in pre-sentence reports to courts, reports for youth offender panels, additional assessments and when sharing information with other external bodies such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). Conclusions drawn should be based on the information and evidence gathered.
- **Sharing information** - The assessment and plan should be shared with a young person, their parents / carers, and where necessary with staff in the organisation and partner organisations or agencies.
- **Reviewing assessments** - Information should be reviewed ***at six monthly intervals and more frequently if there is a significant change*** in the young person's circumstances. At the review stage, records should be updated accordingly.
- **Transferring information** - One of the primary audiences for assessments and plans are staff in other organisations, in particular where they subsequently take responsibility for managing the case. The assessment has to stand alone and be meaningful for any subsequent reader e.g. to secure estate or NPS / CRC via Y2A.
- **Asset+ is mandatory for youth cautions upwards**

AssetPlus is the YJB approved assessment tool and is mandated under YJB National Standards for Youth Justice Services for young people subject to out-of-court disposals (Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions) and community or custodial court orders. Although not compulsory, it is also recommended that AssetPlus is used for prevention and triage cases.

## Modules

During case management, there are specific tasks and processes that need to be carried out at particular points during a young person's involvement with the youth justice system (for example, transferring information to the YJB Placement Service, or completing a Pre-Sentence Report). Discrete modules have been incorporated into the framework to fulfil this purpose, but not all will be applicable to all cases. Information in the Core Record is used to pre-populate information in the modules. The modules are outlined below:

- **Bail and Remand** - The core assessment framework has been aligned to accommodate the level of assessment required for a bail assessment (therefore reducing unnecessary duplication). This information is presented in the Bail and Remand module to address the objections to bail and recommend suitable bail packages to the court.
- **Reports: Pre-Sentence Report, Referral Order Report** - These are similar in structure to the current reports and practitioners will have the option of prepopulating relevant sections of the report from the young person's assessment.
- **Custody** - This module, pre-populated by the main framework where appropriate, is to be completed when the assessment and relevant placement information are required by YJB Placement Service. It also includes a section for completion by the secure establishment upon the young person's arrival. It aims to provide the secure establishment with key information when a young person arrives in custody, including identification of risk to the young person's safety and the risk of harmful behaviour to others.
- **Leaving Custody** - This module enables the recording of all required release information and arrangements and the supports the generation of the appropriate Notice of Supervision/Licence for the young person.
- **Transfers (between YOTs or to adult services)**

These modules include relevant questions in order to facilitate case transfers.

- **Referrals** - This module is populated with relevant information from the main framework in order to facilitate referrals.

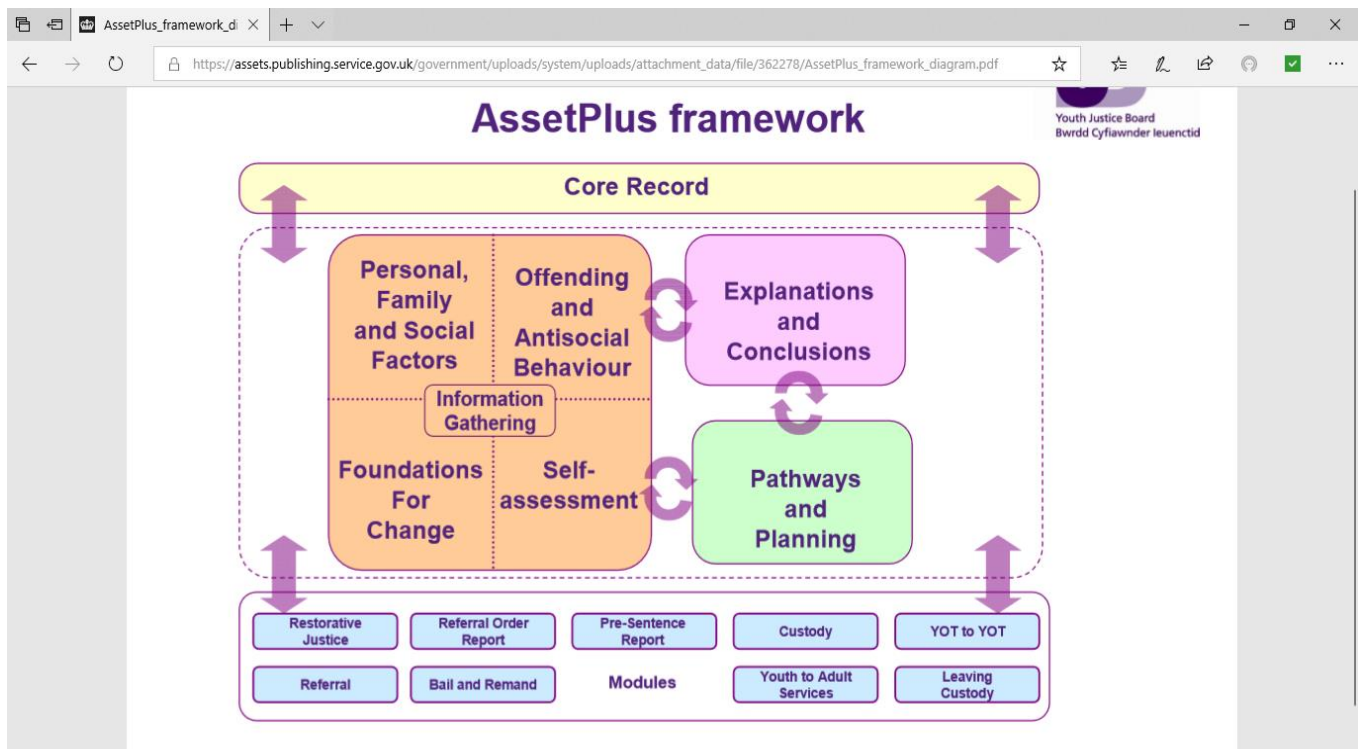
AssetPlus modules will be pre-populated from the main sections in the framework. Where the module is updated it will also automatically update the main sections of the framework.

### Out of Court Disposals

Asset+ must be used for youth caution and youth conditional caution referral from Police to inform the final decision and any subsequent intervention. It is discretionary for Triage or Prevention. The Referral module or RJ module will be used for OoCDs.

### Young People in Custody

Practitioners within the secure estate will be responsible for updating the relevant sections of the assessment and intervention plan whilst YOT practitioners will continue to retain overall case management responsibility including responsibility for any reviews of Asset Plus. Secure establishment staff do not make risk of serious harm or likelihood of reoffending judgements and they do not determine the overall level of concern for a young person’s safety and wellbeing. Any review or amendment of these judgements must take place during a YOT update of Asset+. However, secure establishment staff will update risks (future behaviours and adverse outcomes) and YOT practitioners should take account of all of the latest information in relation to these when making judgements.



## 1.2 Assessment stage triggers of AssetPlus modules

Single stage approach - For young people entering custody a single stage approach should be used in order to minimise any duplication of information. The figure below demonstrates how stages should be used in order to trigger the appropriate modules for the young person's journey from community to custody.

Module population - The AssetPlus modules will pre-populate with information from the last completed assessment stage (where one exists). It is recommended that, where possible, the main sections of AssetPlus are completed prior to any relevant module.

<b>Referral In (Prevention)</b>	To complete an initial assessment when the young person is referred for a prevention intervention
<b>Referral In (O OCD)</b>	To complete an initial assessment when the young person is referred for an out-of-court disposal
<b>Placement Notification</b>	To provide a notification to YJB Placement Service if the young person is at risk of entering custody for a young person being recalled or breach where there is a risk of custody
<b>Bail Recommendation</b>	To prepare a Bail Recommendation package for a young person appearing in court for a bail hearing and there is a risk of remand
<b>Sentenced (No Report)</b>	When a young person is sentenced without a formal report to the court
<b>Pre-Sentence Report</b>	To prepare a Pre-Sentence Report for a young person where the outcome will be a community order
<b>Pre-Sentence Report (all options)</b>	To prepare a pre-sentence report for a young person where the outcome could include a custodial sentence
<b>Post-Court Report</b>	To complete a Post-Court Report Bail and Remand Custody
<b>Referral Order Report</b>	To complete a Referral Order Panel Report for an initial panel
<b>Pre-Release from Custody</b>	(YOT and secure estate)
<b>To prepare for the young person's release from custody Review (YOT and secure estate)</b>	
<b>To complete a standard review or review based on change of circumstances</b>	

<b>Referral Order Report</b>	(only if disposal is Referral Order)
<b>Transfer to Probation</b>	To complete a review in preparation for the young person transfer to adult services
<b>Transfer YOT to YOT</b>	To complete a review in preparation for the young person transfer to another YOT
<b>Case Closure</b>	To complete a final end of Intervention review
<b>Referral Order Report</b>	(only if disposal is Referral Order)
<b>Entering Custody</b>	(Secure estate only)
<b>To complete a review when the young person arrives in a secure establishment</b>	

### 1.3 Core Record

The purpose of this section is to provide a summary of the essential information required about the young person (primarily pre-populated from other areas of the core assessment framework). It includes and provides the following:

- information about critical points identified relating to needs, safeguarding and public protection
- key action points from the young person’s intervention plan; and
- summary of key information about the young person, ensuring that practitioners and managers have the most up to date information to hand.

**The information in Core Record will be populated through a combination of:**

1. information from the case management system, e.g. young person and parent/carer details and offences details.
2. information from other sections of Asset+, e.g. judgements from Explanations and Conclusions and an intervention summary from Pathways and Planning.
3. information that is calculated, e.g. age at first conviction and sentence; and,
4. information that is entered directly by the practitioner, e.g. previous contact with other services and their details.

## Risks and Concerns

- **RoSH judgement** -This judgement will be populated from the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section. ***This question can only be modified by YOT practitioners.***
- **YOGRS** - ***This question is not applicable to prevention cases.*** This will be automatically calculated where relevant based on a number of static factors.
- **Likelihood of Reoffending** - This judgement will be populated from the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section. ***This question can only be modified by YOT practitioners.***
- **Assessed as a risk to children?** - This question will be populated from the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section. ***This question can only be modified by YOT practitioners only.***
- **Previous safeguarding or public protection incidents and details** - You should check YOT records and previous community safety public protection incidents (CSPPI) to determine whether any previous safeguarding or public protection incidents have been recorded for the young person.
- **Overall safety and well-being concerns** - This judgement will be populated from the Explanations and Conclusions (young person's safety and well-being) section.
- **Risk of self-harm - An alert flag:** Risk of physical harm has been identified will be presented if physical harm is selected as an adverse outcome in the Explanations and Conclusion (young person's safety and well-being) section.
- **Risk of suicide - An alert flag:** Risk of Death has been identified will be presented if 'Death' is selected as an adverse outcome in the Explanations and Conclusions (young person's safety and well-being) section.
- **Gang associations** - This will be calculated based on response to a gang association question in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (family, parenting and relationships) section.
- **Concerns regarding a specific known victim and details** - Refer to the Offending/Anti-social behaviour section and the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section when answering this question.
- **Staff safety concerns or considerations and details** - Refer to the potential victims identified in the Explanations and Conclusion (future behaviour) section when answering this question.



- **Other (locally-defined) risks associated with the young person and details** - Refer to the Personal, Family and Social Factors section and the Explanations and Conclusions (future behaviour) section when answering this question. Examples could include child sexual exploitation or concerns over extremism or radicalisation.
- **Physical health concerns or disability** - This will be calculated based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (young person development) section.
- **Mental health concerns** - This will be calculated based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (young person development) section.
- **Substance misuse concerns** - This will be calculated based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (lifestyle, identity and behaviour) section.
- **Speech, Language, Communication and Neuro-disability concerns** - This will be calculated based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (young person development) section.

### **Contacts with Services**

**Relevant previous assessments (including YOT)** - Relevant assessments would be those conducted by specialists such as education, substance misuse or health assessments; excluding previous stages of AssetPlus. The capture of all relevant assessments is highly important in terms of identifying sources of information and ensuring that assessments are not duplicated.

**Other professionals or services involved with the young person** - If no other agencies are or have been involved with the young person 'not applicable' should be entered.

The information entered here will be populated into the graph in the Explanations and Conclusions section to help analyse interconnections and past behaviour. It is therefore critical that all information is entered correctly, including start and end dates where known.

**Sources of information used in this assessment** - You need to ensure that the information included within the assessment is as complete as possible, that the information is verified through multiple sources and that all the sources used are identified. All sources of information that have been used in completing the stage should be recorded here. Sources of information should not reference sources used throughout the history of the assessment but only those sources that have been used in that particular stage.

A specific source of information may also be referenced in other question level responses where key evidence is provided.

**Information still to be obtained** - There may be pieces of information that are yet to be obtained or verified. Where this is the case you should indicate what are they and which source the information will

come from. Any further details such as plans to obtain the information or details of why information is delayed should also be recorded.

**Intervention Summary** - A summary of the Our Intervention Plan will be provided here as a quick reference to the work the young person is currently undertaking.

**Targets** - The targets will be populated from the Pathways and Planning (Our Intervention Plan) section.

**Date of next review** - The next review date will be populated from the Pathways and Planning (Our Intervention Plan) section.

## **1.4 Information Gathering**

This section facilitates the identification of key factors affecting a young person's life (both positive and negative). It includes:

- **personal, family and social factors**
- **offending / anti-social behaviour**
- **foundations for change; and**
- **self-assessment**

Within sections, additional 'further exploration' questions allow for flexibility in the completion of AssetPlus and the ability to match the level of detail with the complexity of the case.

### **Personal, Family and Social Factors**

- Living arrangements and environmental factors
- Parenting, family and relationships
- Young person's development
- Learning, education, training and employment

### **Offending and Anti-social Behaviour**

- Offending and anti-social behaviour
- Patterns and attitudes
- Other behaviours of particular concern

These sections are relatively self-explanatory.

## Foundations for Change

The purpose of this section is to identify positive goals and opportunities in a young person's life and to record the competing influences that are factors for and against desistance.

The section explores:

- personal goals and aspirations.
- the young person's ability to cope with issues.
- prospects or chances the young person has to achieve a positive outcome.
- involvement and progress with previous youth justice services and other organisations; and,
- key factors for and against desistance.

This section comprises of four sub-sections:

- ***Resilience and goals***
- ***Opportunities***
- ***Engagement and participation***
- ***Factors affecting desistance (see below)***

**Desistance categories are:**

- Attitudes of Offending / Behaviours
- Living arrangements, housing and finances
- Social and community; neighbourhood
- Parenting, Care and Supervision
- Family and wider networks
- Care history
- How the young person relates to others
- Physical health and development
- Speech, Language, Communication & Neuro-disability
- Emotional development and mental health
- Substance misuse
- Features of lifestyle
- Self-identity
- Young person as a parent
- Thinking and behaviour
- Learning, Education, Training & Employment

- Resilience and goals
- Engagement and participation

### ***Definition - Desistance***

*Desistance research focuses on the routes out of offending. In the AssetPlus Rationale document, Dr Kerry Baker describes desistance in the following terms:*

- *Firstly, desistance is best viewed as a process rather than a one-off event.*
- *Secondly, understanding desistance involves taking account of both individual factors (such as goals and attitudes) and social context (such as the opportunities available to a young person in their community).*
- *Thirdly, it is useful to distinguish between 'primary desistance' i.e. 'any lull or crime-free gap in the course of a criminal career' and 'secondary desistance' which relates to adopting a new 'non-offender' identity.*

*Factors for desistance (those which will be influential in the young person desisting from offending) and against desistance (those which will be influential in the young person persisting in offending) are identified throughout the Information Gathering sections of AssetPlus.*

## **Self-Assessment**

### **Self-assessment for young person**

The following sub-sections will appear at all stages:

- Family, home and relationships
- Smoking, drinking and drugs
- Health and how I feel
- Friends
- School, college and work
- Offending
- Behaviour
- My future
- Working with the YOT

## **Self-assessments for parents or carers**

AssetPlus includes specific self-assessment questionnaires for parents/carers in order that they can give their views about the young person. The parent or carer self-assessment tool uses a similar design and format to the young person's self-assessment and is in the first person format only. The sub-sections are very similar to those of the young person's self-assessment but clearly have different wording to reflect the fact that they are giving their views on their child.

### **The following sub-sections appear at all assessment stages:**

- About your child
- Health / lifestyle
- School, college and work
- At home
- Behaviour
- Offending
- Strengths and interests
- Working with the YOT
- Timeline

## **1.5 Explanations and Conclusions**

This section provides the opportunity for practitioners to review and analyse all the information gathered (i.e. drawing together all the different strands and looking at the interaction between factors) in order to explain the young person's behaviour in the context of their life situation. This analysis then enables the practitioner to make judgements about the risk of reoffending, the risk of future harmful behaviour and the young person's safety and well-being in the short to medium term.

The purpose of this section is to:

- analyse and explain the young person's behaviour
- identify potential future harmful behaviours and make judgements about the young person's future offending and risk of serious harm to others; and
- identify the possible circumstances or events that could lead to adverse outcomes for the young person and make an overall safety and well-being concerns judgement.

**Before completing this section you should review the information and answers in all previous sections.**

The Explanations and Conclusions section includes the following sub-sections:

- **Understanding offending behaviour / Understanding behaviour (prevention cases)**
  - Context and patterns
  - Behaviour so far: interconnections and interactions between factors
  - Factors affecting desistance
  
- **Future behaviour**
  - Type of behaviour and impact on others
  - Context for behaviour, likelihood and imminence
  - Dangerousness (if applicable)
  - Summary section
  - MAPPA (if applicable)
  
- **Safety and well-being**
  - Adverse outcome, impact and cause
  - Context, likelihood and imminence
  - Summary section

## **2. Planning Interventions**

### **2.1 Pathways and Planning**

This section allows for practitioners to create a single intervention plan and helps to identify priority pathways out of offending. The structure of Pathways and Planning ensures that the detail of intervention planning is clearly linked to achieving specified outcomes for a young person. Planning, in order to manage risks to others and risks to the young person's safety and well-being, is also covered in this section.

The Pathways and Planning section includes the following sub-sections:

- Intervention indicators
- Key areas of intervention
- Resources and proposals
- Tailoring interventions
- Overall progress
- Our intervention plan
- My targets
- My future targets
- Other information

- Additional external controls / actions
- Additional information
- Temporary release
- Dealing with changing circumstances
- Countersignature and oversight

### **Intervention indicators**

This section pulls together the judgements and ratings required to determine a young person's Scaled Approach intervention level. It also records other key information from other plans.

The key judgements pre-populated from the Explanations and Conclusions section include:

- **YOGRS**
- **Likelihood of reoffending**
- **RoSH**
- **Overall level of safety and well-being concern**
- **Assessed as risk to children**
- **MAPPA category**
- **MAPPA level**
- **Is the young person on the sex offender register?**
- **Has or had a child protection plan** - This will be populated from the Personal, Family and Social Factors section.
- **Identified SEN** - This will be populated from the Personal, Family and Social Factors section.
- **Current enforcement status** - This question is not applicable for OOCd disposals or prevention cases.
- **Populates a status for any breach matter.**

### **Scaled Approach intervention level**

You should consider the indicative rating and ***use your professional judgement*** to record the Scaled Approach intervention level that will be applied. The level entered should only be different to the indicative level in exceptional circumstances, e.g. if the level has also been influenced by other specialist assessments. Any amendments to the indicative level will require you to provide an explanation to justify the difference.

- ***If the Scaled Approach intervention level has been amended, please give reasons***
- ***If the Scaled Approach intervention level you have selected is different to the indicative intervention level, you should enter an explanation for the difference.***

- Summarise key conclusions from other relevant assessments (e.g. AIM / SAVRY)

If any other relevant specialist assessments have been completed, particularly if they influence the level of intervention, you should summarise the key findings and conclusions of these here.

### **Other plans in place**

If there are any other plans in place for the young person these should be referenced and attached to this sub-section. The content of any other plans should be considered when completing Pathways and Planning to ensure that the targets and goals complement each other.

### **Key areas of intervention**

This section asks you to summarise the assessment and prioritise what needs to be done around five key areas for intervention:

- Goals and life opportunities
- Not offending
- Not hurting others
- Keeping safe
- Repairing harm (Restorative Justice)

### **Restorative Justice**

The Restorative Justice (RJ) module is a compulsory module triggered from the Pathways and Planning section of the framework. The majority of the module will be pre-populated with responses from elsewhere in the framework, bringing together relevant information about the young person's attitudes to offending, the victim and response to previous RJ interventions, as well as any identified priorities for repairing harm. Additional questions within the module itself will encourage practitioners to think about any specific victim safety concerns and the young person's views about possible RJ interventions. It is intended that the RJ module will act as a precursor to more detailed, local RJ assessments undertaken by victim or RJ workers. The module should provide information to assist decision-making regarding suitability for the full range of RJ.

### **3. Reviewing Asset+ and Intervention Plan**

Reviews of Asset+ should take place no less than every 6 months for interventions longer than this, however practically it is likely that circumstances will change, either positively or negatively and that will require a review on a more frequent basis than every 6 months. A young person could make sufficient progress during an intervention to consider a return to court for early revocation. More likely is that there



will be a change of circumstances or incident that occurs that require Asset+ to be reviewed to address public protection or safeguarding issues. Practitioners should prioritise discussions with line managers within supervision for those cases that are causing most concern and are likely to require the Intervention Plan to be reviewed and further actions identified. **Any changes to the Plan need to be consistent with the principles of defensible decision making.**

### **Definition – Defensible decision**

A defensible decision has been defined by Professor Hazel Kemshall as a decision that will withstand 'hindsight scrutiny' should the case 'go wrong' and negative outcomes have occurred. A decision is defensible if, in spite of a negative outcome, it can be demonstrated that all reasonable steps had been taken in its assessment and management. An action or decision is deemed defensible if an objective group of professionals would consider that:

- all reasonable steps have been taken
- reliable assessment methods have been used
- information has been collated and thoroughly evaluated
- decisions are recorded, communicated and thoroughly evaluated
- policies and procedures have been followed; and
- practitioners and their managers adopt an investigative approach and are proactive.

### **Dealing with changing circumstances**

The purpose of this section is to develop a contingency plan for specific changes which could result in an increase or decrease to the levels of risk associated with the young person's future harmful behaviours or safety and well-being. You should focus on the actual risk or adverse outcome identified, the specific circumstances that would result in an increase or decrease to the level of concern and, if those circumstances occurred, what would need to happen in order to manage the risk or protect the young person.

### **Risk to others**

Thinking about the identified future harmful behaviours, consider what may realistically occur to increase or decrease that risk and what would need to be done as a result to manage it.

What factors or changes in circumstances would result in a significant increase or decrease in the risk of harm or serious harm which the young person presents to others?

You should outline the specific circumstances which would bring about an increase or decrease to the risk.

Examples of factors that could trigger an increased assessment of the level of risk could be:

- a loss of a source of income which therefore increases the risk of violent acquisitive crime

- a turn to drug dealing to financially support themselves
- the young person being made homeless or placed in an inappropriate accommodation which then increases the chance of the young person turning to criminal friends for support
- the young person re-engages in gang activity; and
- the young person has a mental illness relapse

Examples of factors prompting a decrease in risk could be:

- the young person finding positive relationships with friends or a partner
- the young person gains employment; and
- the young person accesses treatment for mental illness

Consider the factors for and against desistance identified in the Foundations for Change or Explanations and Conclusions sections and any impact that a change in those factors could have on the risk the young person poses to others – for example if the young person’s substance misuse is identified as a factor against desistance and the young person increases their use of substances this could result in an increased risk of serious harm and also an increase in the assessed strength of the factor against desistance.

**If changes occurred, what action would need to be taken and how quickly could this be done?**

**If the circumstances outlined above occurred, what specifically would need to be done to manage the risk, by when and by who. For example, informing organisational management or other criminal justice services, altering the level or frequency of contacts or referring to partner organisations.** You should detail which organisations and individuals are responsible for which actions. As well as the practical actions that need to be taken, any processes which need to take place, for example, reviewing the assessment and plan, sharing information with others involved in the case, should also be recorded.

This section should be clear and complete enough so that another person needing to act on it can do so immediately without the need to undertake further research into the case.

### **Young person’s safety and well-being**

With regards to safety and well-being, you should think about the identified adverse outcomes for the young person and consider what could occur to increase or decrease the likelihood of those adverse outcomes occurring and what would need to be done as a result to protect the young person.

***What factors or changes in circumstances would result in a significantly increased or decreased risk to the young person’s safety?***

You should outline the specific circumstances which would bring about an increase or decrease in the overall level of concern for a young person’s safety and well-being.

Factors which could bring about an increase to the overall level of concern for a young person's safety and well-being could include:

- a particular trigger affecting the young person's propensity to self-harm; and,
- circumstances such as a breakdown in an accommodation placement leading to a risk of homelessness

Factors triggering a decrease in the level of concern could include:

- the young person finding positive relationships; and,
- interventions being delivered which promote an increase in self-esteem and sense of self – worth.

### **If changes occurred, what action would need to be taken and how quickly could this be done?**

If the circumstances outlined above occurred, what specifically would need to be done to protect the young person, by when and by whom. For example: using Emergency Duty Team (EDT), liaison with children's services, contacting family members, informing organisational management or other services, altering the level or frequency of contacts or referring to partner organisations. You should detail which organisations and individuals are responsible for which actions. As well as the practical actions that need to be taken and any processes which need to take place, e.g. reviewing the assessment and plan and sharing information with others involved in the case, should also be outlined.

This section should be clear and complete enough so that another person needing to act on it can do so immediately without the need to undertake further research into the case.

### **Managerial Countersignature**

The managerial countersignature process runs in parallel to completion of an Asset+ stage.

### **The countersignature process has three main purposes in Asset+:**

1. it demonstrates that the content and quality of the assessment has been checked and agreed by a manager (or senior practitioner) in two key sections:

- **Explanations and Conclusions** (which also includes Information Gathering sections); and,
- **Pathways and Planning**

2. it represents the *shared and collaborative responsibility* (between individual practitioners and the wider organisation) for judgements made

3. it enables assessment stages within the case management system to be completed.

The following criteria should be considered as a basis for triggering the requirement for a manager's countersignature for the Explanations and Conclusions section:

- RoSH
- indicative Likelihood of Reoffending (LoR)
- Likelihood of Reoffending (LoR)
- where there is a difference between indicative LoR and LoR (increase or decrease)
- overall safety and well-being concerns
- future behaviour matrix impact and likelihood values
- safety and well-being matrix impact and likelihood values
- dangerousness assessment required
- MAPPA category
- specific offences: and
- the young person currently has or previously had a child protection plan

The following criteria should be considered as a basis for triggering the requirement for a manager's countersignature in the Pathways and Planning section:

- countersign all
- countersign none
- those cases where Explanations and Conclusions has been countersigned (as above): and
- Scaled Approach intervention level (and where professional override has been applied to the Scaled Approach intervention level).

Once countersignature has been obtained the stage owner can complete the stage. If a manager has countersigned a section and the owner makes a further change to that section, countersignature will be required again before that stage can be completed.

Depending on thresholds set locally, some or all assessment updates will require countersignature in the Pathways and Planning section.

In providing management oversight to Pathways and Planning a manager will be looking to see that there is a clear relationship between the assessment and the plan by ensuring:

- key Areas for Intervention address all key influences/causes of the priority risks, strengths and needs identified during analysis.
- strengths and opportunities for restorative justice have also been identified to support 'Goals and Opportunities' and 'Repairing Harm' outcomes.

- voluntary, internal and external resources have been considered and support delivery of key areas; and
- targets, actions and controls are identified that will collectively address the key areas and deliver intended outcomes (include those relating to referrals and RJ).

**Reviewing and updating AssetPlus – *Asset+ allows for specific sections to be reviewed or updated without requiring revisions to the whole framework.*** This should encourage practitioners to maintain more up-to-date assessments and intervention plans. The structure of Asset+ also facilitates more effective use of information when young people move through the youth justice system making updating assessments much more straightforward. Asset+ should be reviewed at regular intervals and/or at the point of any significant event in the young person’s life.

**Attaching documents** - The practitioner should upload and attach relevant documents (in MS Word, Excel, Outlook, PDF and jpeg formats, etc.) at various points throughout AssetPlus. Organisations and practitioners should be aware of their local data protection policies regarding what information they attach, retain and share.

**Definition - Stage Owner/Proxy user** - Each Asset+ stage has a single stage owner who will be the practitioner that is responsible for completing the stage. The stage owner has overall responsibility for the stage including obtaining a countersignature, if it is required, and completing the stage. The stage owner is able to assign sections to other specialist practitioners for completion but it will remain their responsibility to ensure that this is done satisfactorily and within the timescales required. If the stage owner is unable to complete the stage due to illness or leave, a manager is able to stop the assessment stage which allows the new stage owner to create a new stage to complete the assessment.

A proxy user is a user that is able to start and complete an assessment stage on behalf of the stage owner. At the start of completing an assessment you need to identify if you will personally complete the full assessment or if others will support you. Those additional users that need to be given access to your assessment and/or plans for this purpose are known as proxy users. They can make amendments on your behalf at any point to any part of the framework. However, if a proxy user has started a stage you can override them if necessary, in order to make any urgent updates.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Care History (Care Definitions)**

This captures information about the young person's history of care and any involvement with children's services. The information will be pre-populated from responses given in the Personal, Family and Social factors section if this has already been completed. If the questions are completed in the Core Record the responses will populate into the Personal, Family and Social Factors section.

- Accommodated by voluntary agreement with parents (section 20 of the Children Act 1989)
- Once a young person who is accommodated under section 20 goes into custody, they are no longer looked-after by the local authority (although the authority may retain responsibility for providing a leaving care service)
- Identified Child in Need (section 17 Children Act 1989)
- Subject to a care order (section 31 Children Act 1989)
- Remand to local authority accommodation (section 23(1) Children and Young person's Act 1969)
- Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation - (Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012)

If the young person is 16 or 17 and the response to any of the five questions above is either currently or previously further exploration is required:

#### **Further exploration**

- Is s/he an 'eligible child' (still in care and looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14)?
- If 'No', is s/he a 'relevant child' (has left care but was looked after for at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and for some time while 16 or 17)?

These two questions are designed to clarify whether a young person is entitled to leaving care services provided by the local authority under the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. If so, the entitlement continues when s/he is remanded or sentenced to custody: it is therefore important to obtain accurate information from children's services about a young person's status.

- Has the young person ever had a child protection plan?

Where the young person has had a child protection plan further exploration will be required:

## Further exploration

Where the young person has either currently or previously had a child protection plan, state under which categories (emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect) and indicate the dates that the plan was in place.

- Any children's services involvement with siblings?

## Details of care history and previous children's services involvement

You are required here to enter any relevant information regarding young person's care history and explain the reason for their contact with these services. Include details of:

- any corporate parent
- age first taken into care
- details of care periods
- whether the young person was in contact with parents or family whilst in care: and
- children's services involvement with siblings

**Known to have been a victim of parental or carer abuse?** - This is pre-populated automatically based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (parenting, care and supervision) section.

**Known to have witnessed domestic abuse?** - This is pre-populated based on responses in the Personal, Family and Social Factors (parenting, care and supervision) section. If there is any parental involvement in a domestic violence programme this may be an indicator of this.

## Definition - Care status

*The Department for Education<sup>15</sup> explains the changes to care status as a result of criminal justice decisions as follows:*

*If the child receives a custodial sentence, the responsibility of the local authority will depend on the child's care status:*

- *If the child is subject to a care order under section 31 of the 1989 Act, they remain looked after and there is no change to their legal status and the local authority continues to be responsible for planning and reviewing the care plan.*
- *If the child was an accommodated child, they will lose their looked-after status whilst serving the custodial sentence as they are not being accommodated in a placement provided by the local*

*authority. Children in these circumstances, will however, be entitled to consideration as a former looked-after child in custody. There is a duty on local authorities to visit such children who have ceased to be looked-after.*

- If the child, had not been previously looked-after but became looked-after as a result of being remanded to local authority accommodation or to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) they cease to be looked-after on being sentenced to custody. Where, however, the child is aged 16+ and has been looked-after for thirteen weeks or more from the age of fourteen, including any period as a looked-after child as a result of the child being remanded, then the child will be a 'relevant child' and should be supported by local authority children's services as a 'care leaver'.*
- If the young person is a 'relevant child' and is entitled to support and services as a care leaver, this status remains unchanged while in custody and the local authority that looked after the young person retains responsibility for providing support during their time in custody and on release. Some young people, including young people who become looked after as a result of being remanded, will acquire this status while they are in custody on attaining the age of 16: that is, those who have spent at least 13 weeks looked-after since the age of 14 and were subject to a care order or who were accommodated or remanded to local authority accommodation immediately prior to entering custody on sentence.*

*If the young person is 16 or 17 and either 'currently' or 'previously' a looked after child (for any period of time, including as a result of remand into custody), you should complete the additional questions in the further exploration section.*