

Report of the Director of Children's Services and Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 13th March 2013

Subject: Investing in Young People: Future Direction for Youth Services in Leeds

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Youth services across the country have seen significant changes and challenges in recent years. In the context of the major financial pressures facing local authorities and their partners, nationally youth services have been reducing and in some places removed altogether.
2. Against this background - plus the strong elected member interest in the role of the youth service and a desire to address performance challenges as part of the wider improvement work taking place across children's services - it has been critical and timely to conduct an assessment of youth work in Leeds. This has drawn on national and local expertise, involved considerable local consultation and has reaffirmed the ongoing value and importance of youth services in Leeds. This process highlighted a collective will to continue to invest in young people, by drawing together the various strands of youth activity currently operating across the council and the city, into a strong co-ordinated model providing an enhanced offer for the children and young people of Leeds. The aim is to make services to young people integral to the ambition to make Leeds the best UK city to grow up in – a child friendly city.
3. This report proposes a new model for youth services across Leeds incorporating:
 - Investment in the key role and influence of Area Committees and clusters to appropriately determine local youth provision that best helps address agreed priority outcomes for each particular area. Area Committees will have more resource and more say around how this is achieved locally.

- A one council approach, drawing together work currently taking place in Children's Services, City Development (including arts, culture, leisure and sports) and with key partners into a coordinated operational model that capitalizes on the success and popularity of the Leeds Breeze brand.
 - A clearly defined, outcome focussed role for a new targeted youth work service to be delivered by the best possible providers. This will be part of a new city-wide provision, embedded within one simple framework:
 - A universal guarantee: *supporting all young people to be active, well informed and engaged. Building on Breeze and maximising the diversity of partnerships and organisations in the city.*
 - A targeted guarantee: *enabling young people who are identified as vulnerable or who have specific needs in accessing the range of opportunities available, to do so.*
 - A specialist guarantee: *ensuring that young people with specialist needs (those with the most complex challenges, requiring workers with very specialised skills) are able to be on a path to success and contribute positively to society through the provision of restorative services for them, their families and communities.*
4. The report outlines a new framework that maintains clear accountability through the Children's Trust Board arrangements.
 5. There is a clear expectation that the voice of children and young people will be at the heart of how the new approach develops with clear evidence of how young people's views have informed decisions about services at a local level.
 6. The youth review will enable £2.54 million to be spent on targeted youth work across local areas, with the allocation determined in liaison between the Executive Member for Children's Services and Area Committees. At the same time it will allow a new allocation to the overall Area Committee budget, ringfenced for youth activities, of £250k in 2013/14 and £500k in 2014/15. The implementation of these changes will also support the approved budget proposals which target a net £0.4m savings in 2013/14 and a further £0.7m of savings in 2014/15 from the Youth Review.

Recommendations

5. Members are recommended to:
 - (i) Note the comprehensive consultation and assessment work undertaken to develop a new vision for the 'youth offer' in Leeds, endorsing the continuing commitment to youth services as a key strand of the child friendly Leeds ambitions.
 - (ii) Approve the new 'youth offer' outlined in this report bringing together a more co-ordinated approach to universal services, improved targeted and specialist provision, through an enhanced role for Area Committees and clusters and a stronger use of the Breeze brand.

- (iii) To delegate responsibility to the Director of Children's Services and Director of City Development in consultation with the relevant Executive Board Members to implement the remodelling of council run youth services and those provided by key partners in order to deliver the new approach. Full staff and Union engagement will also be ensured through this process.
- (iv) Endorse the proposal for discussions between the Executive Member for Children's Services and Area Committees about how to best enable spend of £2.54 million on targeted youth work across local areas in Leeds.
- (v) Approve a new allocation to the overall Area Committee budget ringfenced for youth activities of £250k in 2013/14 and £500k in 2014/15, with a clear expectation that young people help to shape decision making around the spending of this resource, against an agreed set of outcomes.

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report proposes a fundamental redesign of youth provision in Leeds that affirms the continuing key role of the youth service, strengthens the role of Area Committees and clusters, pulls together existing services through a coordinated approach and enables the enhancement of universal, targeted and specialist youth services.
- 1.2 The report asks members to note and approve the proposed direction enabling the necessary restructuring to take place during 2013.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Youth services across the country have seen considerable changes and challenges in recent years. Following changes in national policy relating to youth work, in the last three years there has been a significant reduction in national funding, including grants that previously supported the delivery of youth work, and Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) services for young people. All previous funding streams were amalgamated into the Early Intervention Grant (EIG), which has itself been changed in the past year, giving Leeds less funding to use at our discretion. The impact of these changes significantly reduced the revenue funding available to provide services for young people. Given the major financial pressures facing local authorities and their partners, these changes have fundamentally affected the role of youth work across the country, with some services reducing, or even removed altogether.
- 2.3 In the context of these changes we have taken the opportunity in Leeds to carry out a full assessment of youth services. We have done so at a time when children's services is going through a rapid period of development, implementing initiatives that aim to transform the life chances of children and young people across the city, with the ambition of making Leeds the best city in the UK to grow up in – a child friendly city. Through this work we have re-affirmed that youth services have a continuing and key role to play in meeting these ambitions. They are a vital component of the overall offer to our children and young people and will play an important part in changing how the city supports young people and their families. By redesigning and investing in our youth offer we will demonstrate the seriousness of our intent to not only maintain but enhance services for young people and improve their outcomes and therefore the prosperity of the city.
- 2.4 In recognition of the significant interest in youth provision, the consultation undertaken has been extensive. To provide an objective expert perspective a recognised expert in youth services, undertook an independent review which then fed into wider work across the service. Elected members have been involved throughout, in particular Area Committee Chairs and the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, plus a cross-party working group chaired by the Executive Member. Many staff have been consulted, as have key partners, including the voluntary sector. Young people from school councils as well as existing youth service settings have also been involved. This approach has helped build a broad and strong consensus around the continuing importance of the service and the direction of travel.

- 2.5 As a consequence of this review we now have a clear proposal for how to take forward youth services in Leeds. Our new approach will guarantee a bolder, more co-ordinated and flexible youth offer that, through more local influence and greater accountability, will improve outcomes for more children and young people, ultimately contributing to our child friendly city ambitions.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The new proposal for youth provision in Leeds reflects the collective will to capitalise and build on the existing breadth and quality across the city. We are proposing an expanded and more coordinated universal 'offer' incorporating the full range of provision available to young people across the city, complemented by a more effective targeted and specialist service at local level. Local decision makers, at clusters and Area Committees will be empowered and supported to shape services, with resources allocated to support this. The overall 'offer' will become much more visible to young people through the expanded use of the Breeze brand. The impact of this work on improving outcomes will be accountable to elected members and the Children's Trust Board. Each aspect of this new, bolder approach is described further below.

A universal guarantee

- 3.2 Across the city we will reshape the universal youth offer of services accessible to all young people. The key premise of this is recognition for the huge amount of positive work already taking place with young people right across Leeds, not just through designated youth workers, but from a wide range of sports, leisure, arts and cultural services available. Through better coordination of these different areas of work we will offer an enhanced package of opportunities to young people that link together through coordinated marketing, promotion and where appropriate direct services. This opportunity is not limited to council run services, but can and must incorporate the voluntary sector, schools, colleges, universities health and many other partners.
- 3.3 We will ensure enhanced coordination by bringing together different teams from across directorates that currently provide aspects of this wider youth offer. This will create the conditions in which they can work together more effectively. Specifically it is proposed that elements of the team and resources in Children's Services are integrated with the Culture and Sport team in City Development. This will help develop a more coherent and consistent cultural offer for children and young people. There is also a strong relationship between these proposals and the direction of travel outlined in paper also on the March 2013 Executive Board agenda 'Inspiring a Generation: a Sporting Legacy for Leeds'. The combined impact of these proposals will reinvigorate the prominence of sports at a local level, giving sport a stronger presence within the package of opportunities available.

A targeted guarantee

- 3.4 In addition to an enhanced universal youth offer, it is essential that in the context of the wider children's services restructuring that has already taken place and the statutory responsibilities the services must meet to the most vulnerable children,

the 'offer' also incorporates targeted and specialist services. Targeted provision will be refocused locally to ensure vulnerable young people (for example those from hard to reach backgrounds, or with specific challenges such as poor school attendance) can access both services that are part of the universal youth offer, and specific initiatives offering them targeted support, and can do so as close to home as possible. The Executive Member for Children's Services and Area Committees will work together to shape the framework that determines how the £2.54 million targeted youth work budget can be delivered by the best possible providers. This work will also contribute to addressing wider priorities, such as child poverty and raising aspirations, by introducing more young people to a wider range of opportunities.

A specialist guarantee

- 3.5 In relation to our most vulnerable children and young people (those with the most complex challenges, such as acute disabilities, requiring workers with very specialised skills) and their families we will continue to focus on the provision of specialist restorative services in order to impact positively and constructively on their lives and the lives of those around them. Again, in the context of the wider restructuring of services that has already taken place we will take the opportunity to integrate these services more effectively and build them into the concept of the wider youth offer, so all young people can feel that within the offer there is support for them, applicable and tailored to their specific needs.

A Stronger Shaping and Commissioning Role for Area Committees and Clusters

- 3.6 The proposals within this report envisage a stronger, broader and more influential role for Area Committees in shaping youth provision across the city. Better central coordination of universal, targeted and specialist youth services will bring coherence and greater intelligence, but crucially the shaping and determination of how and where these services are offered will be lead locally through an enhanced role for Area Committees and clusters. There is significant potential for how this type of approach could develop. If Area Committees, clusters and other local organisations and partnerships embrace opportunities to fund projects more flexibly and dynamically around shared priority outcomes we will be better placed to enhance projects that make the biggest difference, delivered by the best possible providers.
- 3.7 We want to give these local partnerships - where there is the greatest knowledge of what is needed in a given area - the resources, framework and flexibility to determine the type of support that can be of most value to local young people and the ability to lead on determining what those services should be.
- 3.8 As highlighted above, Children's Services will provide capacity to work with the Executive member for Children's Services and Area Committees to redesign the targeted youth work service. £2.54 million is allocated in the budget for this provision.
- 3.9 Initially Area Committees will have an overall budget of £250K in 2013/14 and £500k in 2014/15. This will be ringfenced for youth activities and enable Area

Committees to shape the design and implementation of a local activity programme for young people.

- 3.10 It is proposed that the allocation of this resource to Area Committees will be based on the 8-17 population in each ward. However, the final funding formula is being determined through a current period of consultation with elected members.
- 3.11 Area Committees and clusters will be able to make their own decisions, or operate in partnership across boundaries with one another to identify what their young people need, but will do this through a clear accountability framework that ensures their decisions are tied to addressing priority outcomes and making a real difference to the lives of young people and their communities.
- 3.12 Clusters have an existing resource that they are already using to direct local services. This model offers the opportunity for them to draw upon an enhanced youth offer and pool resources further with Area Committees, building closer working relationships built around shared objectives for young people.

Using Breeze to promote the new Youth Offer

- 3.13 We will pull the marketing and promotion of the overall universal, targeted and specialist offer together by enhancing the breadth, usage and coordination of the 'Breeze' brand. The brand is strong already, with an established web presence, the widely used and recognised Breezecard and Breeze activities running regularly throughout the year which are recognised, well regarded and considered safe, positive opportunities by thousands of young people. We have an opportunity to make the brand synonymous with a much broader spectrum of what is available to young people and in doing so make clear that there is a varied, safe and accessible 'youth offer' available all year round. We will provide three main 'Breeze on Tour' events that happen in the city each year, which are consistently held in high regard by children, young people and parents alike.
- 3.14 Area Committees will also have the ability with the new resources available with local partners to commission 'mini' breeze events for the local area as they feel appropriate.

Clearer Accountability

- 3.15 The new model rightly empowers Area Committees and local clusters to use their expert knowledge to shape services for young people. It is vital that these decision-making powers are set within a clear framework that links back to the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and to the views of young people. The decisions taken locally will be reported regularly through the Children's Trust Board arrangements and through the Council's governance model to make sure this link back to key city outcomes is being applied consistently. This will be aligned with reporting from the newly formed integrated team overseeing the universal offer so that members and the Children's Trust Board get an understanding of both the citywide picture and local developments.

- 3.16 In allocating specific youth service budgets to Area Committees, Executive Board is also recommended to stipulate that young people are supported to have a strong voice in the local decision making about how this should be spent and where it can make the biggest difference.

Officer Support

- 3.13 These bold proposals for the youth offer involve a new model that will require officer guidance and support to implement effectively. Officers with the relevant skill set, for example in commissioning, will work closely with Area Committees and clusters to provide this and to help ensure a link back to priority outcomes.

Strategic Direction

- 3.14 The proposals outlined in this report will become a key aspect of the ambition to make Leeds a child friendly city. The new, bolder Youth Offer will complement other initiatives to raise the profile of services for young people and enhance the coordination of those services.
- 3.15 The model proposed for better local decision-making about services also complements the wider direction that the council and our partners are pursuing around stronger locality working, as highlighted in the report to Executive Board in December 2012 'Review of Area Working: Findings and Recommendations'.
- 3.16 That report made a specific recommendation that the Executive Board endorses and supports the development of more locally responsive and accountable services and agrees priority action in relation to youth services (as well as several other areas). This report brings forward proposals about how youth services can become more locally focused.

Next Steps

- 3.17 Implementation of all of the proposals outlined above requires a coordinated and sensitive approach that fully engages and supports the staff affected and effectively communicates the new vision and model for the service. It is proposed that a period of restructuring is initiated following approval of this report with a target completion date of autumn 2013. Staff and Unions will be fully involved throughout, with the integration of Children's Services and City Development Teams planned carefully to complement the priorities of those affected.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 As discussed in paragraph 2.4, consultation as part of this review has been extensive and included:

- Elected members – in addition to the many meetings that have already taken place there will be a further day of consultation events on 6th March, from which supplementary feedback can be provided to Executive Board.
- Young people.
- The voluntary, community and faith sector.
- Staff

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken. The recommendations in this report will be supported by further equality assessment as re-design proposals are co-produced with Area Committees.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The recommendations in this report support the city priorities and in particular the obsessions and priorities contained in the Children and Young People's Plan, the Leeds Education Challenge and the priorities of the Sustainable Economy and Culture Partnership. They are also complementary to those in the March 2013 Executive Board paper 'Inspiring a Generation: a Sporting Legacy for Leeds' and as discussed above, they complement the report to Executive Board in December 2012 'Review of Area Working: Findings and Recommendations'.
- 4.3.2 Youth provision both city wide and locally is also at the forefront of initiatives that aim to address the children's services obsession of reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). As a key priority for the city there may be opportunities to draw on further resources and powers through the City Deal that further enhance the model and desired impact proposed in this report.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 Recommendations in this report will support the approved budget proposals which target a net £0.4m savings in 2013/14 and a further £0.7m of savings in 2014/15 from the Youth Review.
- 4.4.2 The recommendations in the report are made on the presumption that better value can be achieved through a stronger, local direction of the youth work resources allocated by the Council. The package of resources that can be brought together creatively to improve outcomes for young people can best be achieved by harnessing local capacity. For example there is already good evidence of Area Committees working with cluster partnerships to commission local activity programmes.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 This report is subject to call-in.

- 4.5.2 As detailed arrangements are established about responsibilities encompassed in the new ringfenced youth budgets being allocated to Area Committees, an appropriate Area Committee function schedule will be drawn up to clarify these.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 High consideration must be given to the implications of the recommendations for staff in the LCC Youth Service.
- 4.6.3 There are a number of youth work contracts with voluntary sector bodies in Leeds currently funded who will need to be supported through new or revised commissioning arrangements.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 In light of significant national changes and financial pressures and the evolving local context for children's services in Leeds, a thorough review of Youth Services has been undertaken. This has reaffirmed the key role for youth services in Leeds and proposed a bold, new youth offer that locates these services as a key part of the child friendly city ambitions. Through a new universal, targeted and specialist guarantee underpinned by more integrated service delivery; a stronger, clearer role for Area Committees and clusters; and a bolder branding of the overall offer building on the success of Breeze, Leeds is well placed to take forward youth work positively and ensure it makes a meaningful difference to the lives of thousands of children and young people.

6 Recommendations

6. Members are recommended to:

- (i) Note the comprehensive consultation and assessment work undertaken to develop a new vision for the 'youth offer' in Leeds, endorsing the continuing commitment to youth services as a key strand of the child friendly Leeds ambitions.
- (ii) Approve the new 'youth offer' outlined in this report bringing together a more co-ordinated approach to universal services, improved targeted and specialist provision, through an enhanced role for Area Committees and clusters and a stronger use of the Breeze brand.
- (iii) To delegate responsibility to the Director of Children's Services and Director of City Development in consultation with the relevant Executive Board Members to implement the remodelling of council run youth services and those provided by key partners in order to deliver the new approach. Full staff and Union engagement will also be ensured through this process.
- (iv) Endorse the proposal for discussions between the Executive Member for Children's Services and Area Committees about how to best enable spend of £2.54 million on targeted youth work across local areas in Leeds.
- (v) Approve a new allocation to the overall Area Committee budget ringfenced for youth activities of £250k in 2013/14 and £500k in 2014/15, with a clear

expectation that young people help to shape decision making around the spending of this resource, against an agreed set of outcomes.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 No specific background papers

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.