

Youth Services – impact of new model

Date: 29th March 2023

Report of: Head of Early Help Services

Report to: Children and Families Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report provides details of the work that has been undertaken since March 2022 to progress the new model of youth work delivery in Leeds.

Youth work delivery supports the Best Council Plan priority of Leeds being a Child Friendly city by providing youth work services across the city and helping young people to develop life skills and be ready for work as they move into adulthood.

The model of youth work delivery will help achieve the priority of inclusive growth by supporting more young people to be active citizens that are able to participate in education, employment or training.

The principles that are set out in the shared vision for youth work in the city support more effective partnership work on a locality basis to ensure young people are safe from harm and community respect and resilience are promoted.

Recommendations

- a) For the Board to support and endorse the approach being taken to continue developing a joined up and consistent approach to the quality assurance and promotion of the Youth Work Offer in Leeds.

What is this report about?

1. This report provides an update relating to the youth work delivery taking place across the City since March 2022. The report references the new Life Coaching Service, locality-based youth work delivery, delivery of the enhanced youth work offer through the commissioning of 3rd Sector organisations and developments in relation to the youth work quality assurance framework.

What impact will this proposal have?

Core Offer – Locality Youth Work

2. Since the commencement of the updated model of Youth Work, Leeds Youth Service have delivered over 5000 sessions to young people. Each individual session within our core offer delivery is part of a wider programme aligned to both the Leeds Vision for Youth Work and the 2018-2023 Children and Young People priorities.
3. The delivery of the core Youth Work offer has taken several forms which include;
 - Centre -based provision, using a range of community spaces to provide young people with a safe environment to be themselves and often engage in much needed support.
 - Mobile van provision, enabling our Youth Work teams to take this safe space into environments where centre-based delivery is not always available.
 - Detached provision has continued, ensuring a regular youth work presence across all communities, engaging young people in their own space whilst targeting identified areas in need of support and intervention.
 - Through constant engagement with young people, communities and partners we ensure that service is targeted to the areas most in need of support to ensure we maximise potential to make a difference to the lives of young people living across Leeds.
4. Core offer sessions are planned, programmed, and delivered to address the needs and priorities highlighted by young people as part of the review. This includes support to ensure their voices are heard, tackling racism and discrimination, support regarding emotional and mental wellbeing and assistance in sourcing employment and apprenticeships. Furthermore, young people identified the importance of support around sexual health, peer pressure and exploitation further supporting the absolute necessity of our centre -based provision in providing the safe space to enable these conversations and subsequent support and guidance.
5. More recently, young people have also identified poverty as a current challenge. Whilst this was a key factor in the review, the escalation in the prevalence of poverty and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic has been unprecedented and as such we have taken several steps to increase support to young people to address this area. From increasing sessions on subjects such as exploitation due to young people being more vulnerable to a new level of risk, to ensuring that many of our centre-based provisions offer basic refreshments to every young person who attends.
6. There is a plan for Locality Youth Work teams to move from the Children and Families Directorate structure to the Safer, Stronger Communities Service within Communities, Housing and Environment Directorate from April 2023. This presents a number of opportunities, specifically in terms of improved locality working. Moving forwards, there is a commitment from both of the relevant leadership teams to work together to achieve a smooth transition into Safer, Stronger Communities whilst ensuring the close working

relationships between locality youth work and the wider children and families partnership, including (but not limited to) early help, statutory social work and the youth service projects is maintained.

Enhanced Offer – commissioned Youth Work consortia

7. As part of the new model of youth work delivery three contracts were awarded in December 2021 to deliver the Enhanced Youth Work offer in the 12 wards across Leeds with the highest levels of deprivation. This enhanced, targeted/specialist provision commenced in April 2022 and aims to meet the needs of our most vulnerable groups of young people living in Leeds, whilst complimenting a Core Offer delivered by the Youth Service Localities Team.
8. Since mobilisation, the total number of sessions and hours of delivery from the Enhanced offer during this period is as follows;
 - Barca Leeds – Leeds Youth Alliance West Consortium – 389 sessions - 1,167 hours of youth work delivery and working with 513 distinct young people
 - LS-TEN - Leeds Youth Alliance South Consortium- 279 sessions - 964 hours of youth work delivery and working with 425 distinct young people
 - Barca Leeds – Youth Alliance East Consortium- 210 sessions – 391 hours of youth work delivery and working with 280 distinct young people

Grants – commissioned Youth Work providers

9. As per the Enhanced delivery offer in the new model of youth work delivery, the grant funded provision continues to focus on the twelve wards with highest indices of deprivation.
10. The providers are Barca Leeds; BHI Black Health Initiative; CFYDC (Chance); Getaway Girls; Hamara HLC; LS14 Trust; New Wortley Community Centre; Reestablish; Shantona; St Luke's Community and Regeneration; and The Youth Association. Whilst several grant recipients are members of the Leeds Youth Alliance, the grants have also supported the delivery of youth work from several other providers including BHI Black Health Initiative and St Luke's Community and Regeneration.

Life Coaching team

11. The new life coaching team was established in November 2022. An Advanced Practitioner and six of the eight youth work posts are now filled. Recruitment is ongoing and it is expected that the team will be at full capacity around May 2023 following a robust recruitment and selection process.
12. In establishing the Life coaching team, the Leeds Practice Model and Re-think Formulation have been at the heart of its development, which along with embedding the new Early Help forms including formulation and other processes on Mosaic, ensures that the team are fully aligned with other Early Help teams and services.
13. As previously stated, young people on the edge of care and those who are NEET or are likely to become NEET and experiencing poor mental health will be given priority access to this service; as such, extensive discussions have taken place with leaders and managers of referring agencies to ensure an awareness of the service offer.
14. The team have started to caseload and support young people, spending time with those young people weekly and liaising with other professionals involved as appropriate with some excellent feedback from the other professionals involved and the young people and their families as well.

Quality Framework

15. The quality assurance of all youth work provision is being developed in consultation with partner agencies. Workshops have taken place with youth work providers in Leeds to establish some consensus as to what quality youth work should look like.
16. A working group with membership from Leeds Beckett University, Yorkshire & Humberside regional Youth Work Unit, Voluntary Action Leeds, Leeds Youth Service and Leeds Youth Alliance has been formed and are developing an appropriate Youth Work Quality Framework for Leeds.
17. The Framework is being designed as a supportive and developmental tool that provides youth work organisations with an opportunity to assess and improve their work within a Leeds structured framework in partnership with Leeds City Council and the partnership are keen to support these developments, to grow the youth work sector in Leeds.

Level 3 and level 6 Youth Work qualification

18. In recognition of the local and national challenges pertaining to the recruitment and retention of qualified youth workers, we have established and successfully recruited to eight Youth Worker in Training posts. A key requirement for recruiting to this role is that the service provides the Trainees with an opportunity to complete the Level 3 qualification in youth work as part of their job. Once successfully completed, trainees will automatically move onto the professional pay scale for Youth workers. The first cohort will commence their 12-month training course in April 2023.
19. In addition, a new Level 6 Degree Youth Work Apprenticeship has been approved. Leeds Beckett University are keen to offer the training element of this Apprenticeship as they already offer the Degree in Youth and Community Work. The course, which will take three years to complete includes one day “off the job” a week for tutoring, placements and written tasks is suitable for staff employed for a minimum of 30 hours in a youth work or related field. The Youth Service are keen to identify and support staff to take up this professional development opportunity in a sustainable way, with course costs being covered by the apprenticeship levy. To develop this opportunity, Leeds and other neighbouring authorities are meeting regularly with Leeds Beckett.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

- a. Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

20. The model of youth work delivery will help achieve the priority of inclusive growth by supporting more young people to be active citizens that are able to participate in education, employment, or training.
21. Youth Work makes a significant contribution to the health & wellbeing of young people in Leeds by providing new opportunities and experiences that will increase informal learning, helping them to develop the life skills and abilities to build healthy relationships, increasing social and emotional capabilities, independence, confidence, and resilience.
22. Youth work programmes include sessions and projects that educate young people about the impact and consequences of climate change and work with them to engage in social action activities that will help tackle and address the causes of climate change.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

23. Extensive consultation took place with a wide range of key stakeholders as part of the youth work review which took place in 2020. Further consultation was undertaken in June 2021 with young people, practitioners and elected members to inform the specific needs and priorities for the grant project brief and specification for the Enhanced Youth Work contracts.
24. Youth work offers young people opportunities for learning that are educative, expressive, participative, inclusive, and empowering. Much of the core offer provision is devised and planned alongside young people from the local communities in which the sessions are delivered. Through consultation with young people as part of the review, young people were clear in the need for Youth Work to be delivered outside of formal learning hours. Whilst this was intrinsic to much of previous delivery, this was re-enforced further by the development of our Core offer with the vast majority of sessions taking place between 18:30 and 21:00, with some sessions running to 23:00 due to identified needs.
25. The Youth Service sees engagement and consultation with key stake holders as essential to the continuous development of the youth service offer. Collaboration with elected members, children and young people, internal partners and external partnerships provide the necessary challenge to ensure the service is meeting the needs of communities.

What are the resource implications?

26. Three contracts were awarded to deliver the Enhanced Youth Work in the 12 wards across Leeds with the highest levels of deprivation. Each contract has an individual specification to reflect the priorities and needs of the three geographical areas of the city (West/North West, South/South East and East/North East) to:
- Barca Leeds – Leeds Youth Alliance West Consortium
 - LS-TEN - Leeds Youth Alliance South Consortium
 - Barca Leeds – Youth Alliance East Consortium
27. Following the competitive application process 14 grant agreements were awarded. Grants were allocated through a robust evaluation, which considered the quality of the applications, fair distribution of funds across the localities and the provision of a varied offer in each ward.
28. The providers are Barca Leeds; BHI Black Health Initiative; CFYDC (Chance); Getaway Girls; Hamara HLC; Health for All; Leeds United Foundation; LS14 Trust; New Wortley Community Centre; Reestablish; Shantona; St Luke's Community and Regeneration; and The Youth Association.
29. The grants were initially awarded for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and there is a proposal to extend these for a further twelve months for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

30. As in other areas of Children and Families services we continue to see a challenge regarding the recruitment and retention of qualified Youth Workers. This is a national issue and the picture in Leeds reflects this. As a result, there continues to be a number of Youth Worker vacancies within the in-house Youth Service. To mitigate this risk the service has established a rolling recruitment process for qualified Youth Worker posts and has established twelve Youth Worker in training posts. We have now successfully recruited to eight of the Youth Worker in training posts. These trainees will be supported to gain an appropriate Youth Work qualification, thus enabling the service to develop and grow its own

workforce for the future. We are confident that by May 2023 all twelve posts will be recruited to.

31. We also hope to be offering the Level 6 Youth Work Apprenticeship opportunity our existing Youth Workers in the near future. This professional progression opportunity will support the development needs of our existing workforce and therefore support the retention of our existing experienced and committed Youth Workers.
32. We continue to work closely with the consortia, supported through colleagues in commissioning to ensure that the new arrangements to deliver the enhanced element of youth work continues to meet the requirements outlined in the contracts. The contracts are closely managed, and regular contract meetings take place with the partnership to navigate any barriers and celebrate successes.

What are the legal implications?

33. This report has no specific legal implications.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

34. The Youth Service Leadership team are confident in the current youth work offer within the city. Given the relatively new changes to the model of delivery, we have not considered other options at this time. In consultation with our commissioning colleagues, we will continue to review the consortia arrangements to ensure that the enhanced offer of youth work continues to meet the needs of communities.

How will success be measured?

35. The performance and quality of Youth Work delivery has been monitored by the Service Lead and Contract Manager ensuring the six principles of the shared vision for youth work are demonstrated. These principles include:
 - Youth work will be valued and understood
 - Participation and Empowerment
 - Collaboration.
 - Inclusiveness, equality and diversity.
 - Respect and positivity
 - Quality, safety and well-being
36. To ensure both the Enhanced and Core Youth Offer can be measured effectively all Youth Work providers are required to use Core+ as the information management tool for youth work. Alongside this quantitative information, providers are required to submit a detailed qualitative report.
37. By presenting both the quantitative and qualitative information we have adopted the 'Making Connections' reports which are completed on a quarterly basis and provide a summary of youth work activity across the South, East and West of the City. The development of these reports provide data and insight into the number of young people benefiting from youth work, broken down by age, gender and ethnicity. This engagement data can be compared with the population data on a ward basis to help inform youth work providers of the cohorts of young people that we need to work harder together to reach and engage.
38. Feedback received from the Making Connections Report has been positive, from both the perspective of contract management but also all youth work providers. This information plays an essential element of the agenda for wedge-based quarterly collaboration meetings, particularly around plans for next quarter, problem-solving and lessons learnt.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

39. Delivery is on-going and the service lead will be responsible for the implementation.

Appendices

40. None

Background papers

41. None