

New Youth Work Model Update

Date: 30th March 2022

Report of: Director of Children & Families

Report to: Children & Families Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report provides details of the work that has been undertaken since April 2021 to establish the new model of youth work delivery.
- The implementation of the new model of Youth Work delivery supports the Best Council Plan priority of Leeds being a Child Friendly City by improving 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 new model for 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 is promoted.

Recommendations

- a) Note the comprehensive consultation and partnership work undertaken to ensure the new model of youth work delivery will be implemented by April 2022.
- b) Support and endorse the approach being taken to develop a joined up and consistent approach to the quality assurance and promotion of the Youth Work Offer in Leeds.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 In April 2021 the Director of Children and Families submitted a report to the Executive Board that presented the findings from the review which had been undertaken into Youth Work in Leeds, and which outlined the vision for youth work together with the proposals for future delivery.
- 2 It was resolved;
 - That the comprehensive consultation and assessment work which had been undertaken to develop the vision for youth work in Leeds, be noted, and that the continuing commitment to youth services as a key strand of work to enable the most vulnerable young people in the city achieve their aspirations and ambitions, be endorsed
 - That the proposed new model of youth work delivery, as detailed within the submitted report, be approved, and that support be given to further work being undertaken which will be led by the Youth Offer Lead in order to co-produce the enhanced youth work specification
 - That it be noted that the new model of youth work delivery will be fully implemented by April 2022.
- 3 The Youth Work review highlighted many areas of good practice across the city and demonstrated the difference youth work makes to the lives of young people in Leeds. In Leeds, youth work is delivered as a preventative and early intervention service for young people. As such, it plays an integral part in delivering the outcomes of the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan and is a key component of achieving our ambition of being a Child Friendly City.
- 4 The future model of youth work delivery will comprise of two strands. A "core offer" of provision that all 11-17 year old young people can access and benefit from and an enhanced, targeted/specialist offer of provision that will meet the needs of our most vulnerable groups of young people living in Leeds.
- 5 This report provides details of the work that has been undertaken since then to establish the new model of youth work delivery.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 6 The new model of youth work delivery comprises of two strands. A "core offer" of provision, delivered by the in-house Youth Service, that all 11-17 year old young people can access and benefit from and an enhanced, targeted/specialist offer of provision that has been commissioned to meet the needs of our most vulnerable groups of young people living in Leeds.
- 7 The impact of COVID-19 on young people's mental health, education, employment, and life chances is profound. It is therefore more important than ever to retain the investment in youth work, which will provide long term services and support to young people as they transition from learning to work.
- 8 Both the in-house Youth Service and commissioned providers will develop and deliver youth work programmes that aim to address the key themes and young people's priorities identified in the consultation phase.
- 9 Key themes included; mental health support, crime and criminal exploitation, anti-social behaviour, reducing social isolation, support into education, training or employment and inclusivity.

- 10 Young people's priorities included support with; having a voice, racism and discrimination, emotional and/or mental health, sexual health, peer pressure/exploitation, getting a job or an apprenticeship and poverty.
- 11 Initial meetings between the Youth Service and commissioned providers have taken place and will continue on a regular basis to ensure a collaborative approach to the delivery of youth work is achieved in each locality. Once the commissioned providers begin their enhanced work it is intended that there will be a joint promotion of programmes.
- 12 Delivery of the grant funded provision and the enhanced youth work contracts will be focused in 12 wards with highest indices of deprivation. This is in recognition that young people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods have lower attainment at school, are more likely to be not in education, employment, or training post 16, and are more likely to be involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

13 The 12 wards are;

East	West	South
Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	Armley	Beeston Hill
Chapel Allerton	Bramley & Stanningley	Holbeck & Riverside
Gipton & Harehills	Farnley & Wortley	Middleton Park
Killingbeck & Seacroft	Kirkstall	Temple Newsam

- 14 Examples of projects that will be delivered include group activity (open access or targeted), community/social action projects, supporting young people into training or work, providing informal mental health support, and supporting transitions.
- 15 Plans are in progress to establish a new team of Life coaches within the LCC Youth Service and recruitment process has begun. Life coaches will work with young people on an individual basis to address their mental health needs such as suicidal thoughts and feelings, self-harm, stress, anxiety or depression and accompany to sessions/activities and provide ongoing support as needed to promote sustainable outcomes. They will link into Early Help Hubs to ensure integrated working and, where necessary, to provide wider joined up support for the whole family where it is needed. It is envisaged that young people, aged 13+ on the edge of care, experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings or self-harm and those that are not in education, employment or training will be given priority access to life coaching support.
- 16 Several support functions have been identified as essential to the effectiveness and sustainability of the new model of delivery of youth work. One of these functions is the quality assurance of all youth work provision. To address this a working group with membership from Leeds Beckett University, Yorkshire & Humberside regional Youth Work Unit, Leeds Youth Service and several 3rd Sector Youth organisations has been established to discuss the quality of youth work in the city. The initial focus has been on identifying and agreeing a common understanding of what good quality youth work looks like. The group are now working together to consider and develop an appropriate Youth Work Quality Framework for Leeds that will be used by the LCC Youth Service and 3rd Sector providers.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 17 Extensive consultation took place with a wide range of key stakeholders as part of the Youth Work review, including on what services were in scope and the timetable for procurement.

- 18 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 Enhance Youth Work contracts.
- 19 Existing commissioned providers of youth work were consulted and were made aware of our intention to close current contracts and grants and undertake a new competitive procurement process.

What are the resource implications?

- 20 The total budget available for Youth Work delivery in 2022/23 is £2.65m. £2m will be allocated to deliver the core youth work offer and the life coaching programme. £450k is available for the enhanced youth work commission and £200k for the youth work grant scheme.
- 21 Three contracts were awarded in December 2021 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:
- Lot 1 Barca Leeds – Leeds Youth Alliance West Consortium
 - Lot 2 LS-TEN - Leeds Youth Alliance South Consortium
 - Lot 3 Barca Leeds – Youth Alliance East Consortium
- 22 A total of 25 grant applications were received. Of these, 11 applications did not pass the first stage of evaluation. At this stage the panel evaluated each application against a number of criteria including; the description of the project was clear, based on the area priorities and linked to positive outcomes, demonstrated a knowledge of young people and key partners in the area; and was clear on who they are targeting, how they will engage them and how they will influence development and delivery of the project.
- 23 This left 14 applications for the panel to discuss and allocate funding across the 3 wedges and 12 wards to ensure a diverse range of projects serving all localities, whilst targeting highest levels of deprivation and identified priorities.
- 24 Following the competitive application process 14 grant agreements totalling £183,621 for Enhanced Youth Work projects have been awarded. Grants are between £5,000 and £20,000 and have been 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.
- 25 The providers are: Barca Leeds; BHI Black Health Initiative; CFYDC (Chance); Getaway Girls; Hamara HLC; Health for All; Hunslet Club; Leeds United Foundation; LS14 Trust; New Wortley Community Centre; Reestablish; Shantona; St Luke's Community and Regeneration; and The Youth Association.
- 26 The grants are to be awarded for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 with the option to extend for a further twelve months.
- 27 This leaves a balance of £16,379. This is due to fewer quality applications being submitted for projects in the WNW. The LCC Youth Service will be asked to deliver a project to address this need.

What are the legal implications?

- 28 This report has no specific legal implications.

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

- 29 As the Enhanced Youth Work offer is to be delivered by new Consortia under new arrangements there is a risk that suppliers may not deliver what they have committed to and/or will not meet all the requirements outlined in the specification/contract. To mitigate these risks the contract will be closely managed and there has been time allowed during the mobilisation period to address any potential risks.
- 30 As in other areas of the Children and Families sector we have seen 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 are now a number of Youth Worker vacancies within the in-house Youth Service. To mitigate this risk the service is currently advertising several qualified Youth Worker posts and several Youth Support Worker posts. Successful candidates for the Youth Support Worker posts will be supported to gain an appropriate Youth Work qualification, thus enabling the service to develop and grow its own workforce for the future.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 31 The new model for 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
- 32 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.
- 33 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.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 34 Numerous options for commissioning youth work were considered and consulted on with stakeholders throughout the youth work review. Other options and models for youth work were discounted for various reasons. This option was found to have the most benefits for young people and communities in line with the findings of the review.

How will success be measured?

- 35 The pandemic has compounded inequalities that already existed, and it has affected vulnerable and marginalised groups the most. The disruption in education has also increased disparities, at a critical time of life for emotional and physical development. Success will be measured by the number of young people who are engaged and supported through youth work provision in order for them to improve their educational and health outcomes and enable them to be active citizens.
- 36 Youth work helps all young people to successfully navigate their journey through adolescence, giving them access to new opportunities and experiences and provide information and guidance that will support their personal and social development. It will raise their aspirations, build resilience, and enable them to make informed decisions that are right for them. The foundations of youth work are built through positive relationships with young people based on mutual respect and voluntary engagement.

- 37 High quality youth work will support young people's increased attendance, attainment and achievement in learning and improve their destinations as young adults. It will reduce the need for statutory interventions in their families' life, reducing teenage conceptions and engagement in risky behaviours such as substance misuse or involvement in anti-social behaviour or offending, all of which will potentially impact on their life opportunities.
- 38 Youth work builds on the strengths of a young person in an asset-based approach and helps build social capital within communities. Youth workers provide emotional and practical support to young people and help them develop the skills they need to succeed in life. Working with young people who are feeling angry and frustrated because of the challenges the pandemic has brought; youth workers can support them to overcome these feelings and give them a voice so they can become active citizens and as a group can strengthen cohesion within the diverse communities of Leeds.
- 39 The performance and quality of Youth Work delivery will be monitored by the Service Lead and Contract Manager. Targets and KPI's set during the mobilisation period will reviewed regularly at contract management meetings to ensure there is accountability and fairness. Feedback on delivery will be sought from a wide range of partners where appropriate including but not limited to, young people, Ward Members, Youth Service colleagues, Communities Team, Youth Justice team and police.
- 40 All Youth Work providers are required to use the Core Plus MIS to record detailed information about the work they are delivering and appropriate information about the young people accessing their provision, age, ethnicity, where they live etc. Alongside this quantitative information, providers will be required to submit a detailed qualitative report on a quarterly basis that will include but is not limited to;
- Activities undertaken
 - Evidence of young people's involvement at all levels
 - Lessons learned
 - Safeguarding
 - Plans for next quarter
 - Partnership working
 - Case studies
 - Evaluation

What is the timetable for implementation?

- 41 The LCC Youth Service is working closely with existing providers to ensure a seamless transition of youth work delivery in readiness for the full implementation date of 1st April 2022.
- 42 The mobilisation period for the Enhanced Youth Work contracts is on track to ensure the new model of Youth Work delivery will be implemented by April 2022.

Appendices

43 None

Background papers

44 None