

## QUESTION 3

### COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 19 MAY 2022

#### Question to Cllr Sutton Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

By Cllr Afsar

---

#### Question

Youth Clubs help street youngsters and young adults to become more responsible members of Society. Do you think the County Council should revisit the idea of youth clubs in order to provide children in our divisions with a better future?

---

#### Reply

In March 2014 the County Council moved away from the traditional direct delivery of youth clubs, in favour of working more collaborative with the thousands of groups that run across the county every week. We deliver this through our close collaboration between the County Council and the Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to fulfil the potential and expectation of our Young People through an organisation called Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS).

While there is no 'one size fits all' model for providing positive activity, the VCSE sector across Staffordshire harnesses a range of grassroots organisations to support our Young People across:

- Universal services such as uniformed, sports/outdoors and creative groups.
- Targeted services - tailored for specific groups or characteristics – offering a range of more specialist activities.

Young People and families can access a directory of services in their local area via the Staffordshire Connects site.

It is important to acknowledge here that we regularly engage young people in their thoughts and views and the introduction of youth clubs is not what they ask for, instead they favour places to go and things to do and therefore that rich picture of activities is something we are keen to promote.

Promoting a diverse VCSE sector, the County Council is able to commission support for Young People requiring a more targeted approach via Youth Offending prevention and Early Help services. This was best demonstrated in the recent pilot of the Vulnerable Adolescence Support Programme, which provided a one-to-one mentor to support engagement of Young People where universal activities were not always appropriate. Our ambition for our communities and VCSE sector has been realised as we explore transforming this service from a pilot scheme to a future commissioned service.

In addition, we commission Holiday Activities & Food Programme which offers targeted positive activity and a hot meal in the Easter, Summer & Winter school holidays to approximately 22,500 school-aged children across the County. To date, the VCSE sector has created the following capacity in the support of this programme:

<b>Holiday Period</b>	<b>Available Places</b>
Summer 21	40,705
Winter 21/22	10,846
Easter 22	19,187

As part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda, local VCSE sector partners have been supported to apply for grants of between £5k-£50k via the Youth Investment Fund in support of the expansion and improvement of local youth facilities in the 24 wards of Staffordshire categorised as 'Left Behind' areas.

In support of this more targeted approach to positive activity and ensuring the sustainability of the wider Support for Young People portfolio, the County Council has committed to producing a statement outlining the sufficiency of local services for Young People which will be a thorough mapping of services which identifies any gaps in provision. This statement will form a key part of how we facilitate meaningful conversations with people about how we meet the needs in the local community working with SCVYS and others to ensure that local Young People have access to the right help and support.