



18 December 2013

Achieving Excellence for Young People

Quote from:

Robert Marshall, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, and Mark Sutton, Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Community Safety:

“The lives & aspirations of young people in Staffordshire have changed out of all recognition in recent times. They are demanding that we change and adapt the way we help them to shape the lives they want, get the most out of school and find a good job.

In this new world we need to make sure we are getting real value for money for every pound of public money we spend for young people in Staffordshire, while continuing to support and advise those individuals who really need our help

Four out of every five young people in Staffordshire never use a county council-funded youth facility or take part in an activity we pay for. We need to make sure they get more out of what they enjoy already and have what they need to move successfully from school into work and into the good life they want.

For us that means looking at new ways of working, better working with partners, and recognising that other organisations, for instance in the voluntary or community sector, are better placed and more able to do the things that young people need.

There is already some great work for young people being delivered by the voluntary, community, public and private sectors – we need to build on that, make it even better and focus even more on the things young people say they want.

By working on a local, district level with the right people and organisations, we can ensure that young people will have targeted and tailored support necessary to achieve their full potential. This is what achieving excellence for young people really means.

To young people our message is simple: we have listened and we are taking action. And where you need some help, we will be there for you.”

Report Summary: This report contains a proposal for a new approach for Staffordshire County Council to achieving excellence for young people. It outlines the reasons for making this recommendation, summarises feedback from a stakeholder engagement exercise and customer insight which has helped to inform our thinking, and puts forward a proposal for commissioning for a new youth offer that is effective and sustainable and promotes personal and social responsibility. The proposal represents a significant departure from the traditional model of investment and is in line with our commissioning principles for a connected Staffordshire. This report seeks agreement to begin public consultation on this proposal and to return to Cabinet in March with a formal recommendation informed by the consultation with young people and their families, staff, trade unions and key stakeholders. For the purposes of this report a 'young person' is between the age of 13 and 19 years of age or up to 25 years for those with a learning difficulty or disability.

Recommendation(s)

We recommend that:

- a. Cabinet endorses the content of the report and the proposed new approach to commissioning for excellence for young people.
- b. Cabinet agrees to consult on the proposal, which represents a significant change to the Council's traditional approach, as the basis for a seven-week public consultation.
- c. Cabinet agrees to a report being brought back to Cabinet in March that will include a detailed appraisal of the proposal and the findings of both the public consultation and in-depth Community Impact Assessment (CIA).

Local Members Interest	
If report is relevant to ALL Members, type 'N/A' into table	
NA	

Cabinet – 18 December 2013

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Recommendations of the Cabinet Support Member for Public Health & Community Safety

I recommend that:

- a. Cabinet endorses the content of the report and the proposed new approach to commissioning for excellence for young people.
- b. Cabinet agrees to consult on the proposal, which represents a significant change to the Council's traditional approach, as the basis for a seven-week public consultation.
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Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People

Introduction

1. In August 2013, Staffordshire County Council agreed three priority outcomes to build a better Staffordshire. These priorities are that the people of Staffordshire will:
 - Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth;
 - Be healthier and more independent;
 - Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.
2. Improving the lives of young people is a vital part of achieving these priority outcomes. The Council has a vision that all young people in Staffordshire can achieve their full potential and will prosper, be healthy and happy, and live safely and supported within their communities.

3. This generation of Staffordshire's young people are growing up in a world that has changed significantly in a short period of time. Developments in technology and the global economic climate have changed how young people live in a fundamental way. Agencies that work with young people must adapt and evolve to ensure young people have the opportunities to reach their full potential.
4. The way local authorities have traditionally operated in the past is no longer financially sustainable. Public organisations have a duty to make the most effective use of whatever resources they have available, and Staffordshire County Council and the wider public sector must change the way it works together to make the most of all available resources to help improve the lives of local people.
5. Effective partnership working is now more crucial than ever to achieving excellence for young people. Improving outcomes for young people is a complex challenge, and ensuring that they are connected to sufficient opportunities is the joint responsibility of many people and organisations, from individuals, families and communities, to partners in the public, private and third sectors.
6. Recent years have seen a significant increase in partnership activity across Staffordshire. Key partners have regularly come together with Staffordshire County Council, for example, through the Health and Wellbeing Board's Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to establish how they can work together to improve outcomes for young people. Although there has been good progress, there is still more to be done.

Achieving Excellence for Young People

7. With this in mind, Staffordshire County Council has embarked upon a review of its current expenditure on youth provision in order to ensure that we focus public money on what the council needs to do to support the most vulnerable of our young people and helps other young people to build the lives they tell us they want, and in many cases already enjoy. As noted above, this review is a part of a broader strategic approach looking at how Staffordshire County Council works to ensure better outcomes for people across Staffordshire.
8. The review has been organised into the following three phases:
 - **Phase 1** – This phase has included an analysis of the current return on investment and outcomes for young people led by the Commissioner for Families and the Commissioner for Skills and Employability. This phase has involved an engagement exercise with key stakeholders during September and October 2013 to establish shared priorities and a county

wide audit of current provision. This report includes a summary of the findings.

- **Phase 2** – Based on the findings of phase 1, Staffordshire County Council is proposing a radically different approach to commissioning for young people based upon new priorities. Subject to approval by Cabinet of a public consultation based on this proposal, a seven week public consultation with the children, young people and families, partners and stakeholders, staff and Trade Unions will take place from the 8th January 2014. The public consultation will inform a detailed appraisal of the proposal and an in-depth Community Impact Assessment (CIA). This report sets out the proposal for public consultation.
 - **Phase 3** – A final report and recommendations will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in March 2014.
9. This report will now go on to outline the reasons for taking a new approach and puts forward a proposal for commissioning a new 'offer' for young people that is effective and sustainable.

Context

10. There are over 73,000 young people aged 13-19 in Staffordshire, making up 8.6% of the total population. Staffordshire is a good place to live for these young people and their families. Compared with other areas in the West Midlands and beyond, Staffordshire's young people enjoy a high quality of life, do well in education and training and benefit from the successes the County has achieved in attracting new employers and creating new opportunities for work. However, for some young people life is not so easy. There are young people in Staffordshire that need extra help with issues such as substance misuse, mental health, teenage pregnancy and youth offending.
11. National surveys of young people conducted by organisations such as the UK Youth Parliament, the National Youth Agency, and Oxfam consistently highlight the same issues as being important to young people. Young people want education and advice on sex and relationships, affordable and positive activities, to feel safe and free from bullying, strong relationships with family members and increasing positive perceptions of young people. Exams, work and school are the biggest areas of concern. These messages are reinforced by feedback received by the County Council to previous surveys and work undertaken by Staffordshire's Youth Action Council.
12. Local authorities have a number of different statutory duties with regard to young people. The most relevant statutory duty relating to youth services is the duty to secure access to positive activities. The duty requires Local Authorities to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that young people

have access to sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and personal and social development.

13. This proposal will ensure that the County Council meets its statutory duties and delivers what young people are telling us that they need. This includes sufficient facilities for such activities; that activities are publicised; and that young people are placed at the heart of decision making regarding the positive activity provision. The duty applies to the 13 – 19 age range, and up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties.
14. In particular, local authorities are charged with addressing the needs of young people at greatest risk of negative outcomes and whose engagement in positive activities is often limited, and by doing so increase their participation through securing access to appropriate provision.
15. From August 2013 local authorities have new duties to promote the effective participation of all 16 and 17 year olds in education and training and to have mechanisms in place to identify young people who are not participating. This compliments existing duties to:
 - Secure sufficient and suitable education and training provision for all 16 to 18 year olds (or aged up to 25 for those subject to a learning disability assessment) and support young people to participate in education and training, particularly the vulnerable.
 - To undertake Learning Difficulty Assessments for those pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need or those pupils the local authority deems would benefit.
 - To lead the September Guarantee process to ensure that all 16 and 17 year olds receive an offer of a suitable place in education or training.
 - To track and report on the participation of young people through the National Client Caseload Information System.
16. In the course of the Council's review, a number of different approaches from other local authorities have been considered. These have underlined the need to modernise our approach within Staffordshire. Best practice from other authorities has demonstrated that these duties can be met through fresh approaches that increase young people's access to activities and deliver better value for money.

17. One particularly successful example to meeting the needs of young people can be seen in Northamptonshire. Following low attendance rates and increasing costs, Northamptonshire County Council decided to restructure its Youth Service in 2006. Northamptonshire decided to commission the majority of its youth services from partners in the community. As a result, participation rose from 3,000 young people to 21,000 in the space of two years and the National Youth Agency rated youth provision in Northamptonshire as first in the country for value for money and second for delivering outcomes¹.
18. As of 2012, Northamptonshire County Council has contracted with the third sector organisation Northamptonshire Association of Youth Clubs (NAYC) to facilitate access and development of new local youth work clubs and projects throughout Northamptonshire and with other third sector partners to meet the needs of more vulnerable groups. This approach has enabled the authority to make significant financial savings, increasing access and delivering against its statutory duties.

Staffordshire County Council Youth Provision:

19. Staffordshire County Council currently spends £5.98m on its Youth and Community Service to deliver activities for young people and £2.75m in Entrust to deliver information, advice and guidance. This makes a combined total investment of £8.73m. There are other investment streams that are currently not part of this review but are referenced further on in this report.
20. Staffordshire County Council's Youth and Community Service currently delivers on a traditional model, mostly focussed upon open access universal provision, with some targeted work, particularly in schools. The biggest areas of spend for the services were employees with £2.98m being spent on 400 staff (105 full time equivalents, 47 full time, 347 part time and 280 volunteers), and £0.93m being spent on premises.
21. For a number of years, the Youth and Community Service has contracted with the Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services to provide support for new and developing community and voluntary youth activities which bears comparison with Northamptonshire. The value of this contract is £0.301m. In 2012/13 SCVYS members provided support for 34,500 young people from across Staffordshire.

¹ Northamptonshire County Council, 2009. *Youth services hitting a national high*.
<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/news/Newsreleases/Pages/2087.aspx>

22. In addition, the Youth and Community Service delivers a range of programmes or initiatives that have a value in relation to connectivity, citizenship, social capital and volunteering:
- The National Citizenship Scheme
 - The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme
 - Bremen Exchange
 - V-Talent Contract
 - Support for the UK Youth Parliament, Youth Advisory Board, Youth Action Council and District Youth Participation Forums
 - Youfindme.uk and Youth Box websites (in partnership with Entrust) which provide information and guidance to young people on where to go, what to do and who to talk to on a range of topics and activities
 - Management of the Chesterton Vision Centre – a state of the art Big Lottery funded facility for the local community - as well as its other facilities
 - PHSE and alternative curriculum programmes in schools on a spot purchase basis
23. During 2012/13 there were 15,902 individual attendees at the Youth and Community Service. This means that in the region of 4 out of every 5 of Staffordshire's 73,315 young people aged between 13-19 **do not** use a council-funded youth and community service. By district, East Staffordshire has the most attendees with 3,762 (38% of young people in the district) attending. However, this contrast sharply with South Staffordshire, Staffordshire Moorlands and Lichfield seeing less than 1,500 individual attendees over the year (7%, 18% and 17% of the young people each district respectively).
24. As of 1 April 2013 Entrust delivered the County Council's duties in respect of information, advice and guidance and meeting the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) legislation through a new contractual relationship. The commissioned service is delivered by 85 staff working in schools, colleges, training providers across the county. The service has three core components:
- Tracking and reporting on young people's participation in education, including undertaking surveys, managing NCCIS data and making statutory returns to the Department for Education.

- Providing Information, Advice and Guidance to young people at risk of not, or who are not currently, participating in education. This includes ensuring that approximately 20,000 16 and 17 year olds receive an offer of a place in either education or training by the end of September. This also includes providing careers advice to young people who are home educated, in a Youth Offending Institution or a Council maintained Pupil Referral Unit.
- Supporting young people with learning disabilities / difficulties by undertaking section 139A Learning Disability Assessments with 550 young people to identify a suitable offer of a place in education and training and review the progress being made in learning.

Findings from Phase One - Stakeholder Engagement

25. As mentioned above, an engagement exercise was embarked upon in order to develop Staffordshire County Council's new approach. The purpose of this engagement exercise was to develop an understanding of what the Council's future priorities should be, to develop an understanding of the current market, and gain a perspective on what is felt to be working for young people and what could be done differently.
26. An engagement exercise took place between September and October 2013 and as part of this key partners in Staffordshire were identified and engaged with, either in writing or in person, including:
 - Headteachers in secondary, middle and special schools
 - All District Council Leaders
 - Staffordshire Youth Action Council
 - The third sector - including VAST, SCIO, Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS).
 - SCC departments and providers – including Families First, YOS, Youth and Community Service, Public Health, Independent Futures, Children's Disability Service
 - Key partners including the Police (PCC) & Fire Services, Entrust, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Sport Across Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent

27. A number of common themes emerged from the engagement exercise which resonate with the County Council's priority outcomes including:
- The need to prioritise investment in services for vulnerable young people.
 - The importance of young people being able to access affordable activities within their local communities.
 - Access to better quality information, advice and guidance for young people, especially in relation to what is available within their local community.
 - An acknowledgement by some stakeholders that the current approach is not sustainable and that multi-agency partnership and a pooling of local resources might be the way forward.
 - Specific issues raised included improved transport options in rural areas and more activities designed for young women and black and minority ethnic groups.
28. It was also felt that there is already a large and diverse range of provision for young people being delivered independently of Staffordshire County Council that many young people are already accessing. This point is also endorsed by the audit of provision conducted by Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services as part of the review (Appendix A).
29. Appendix B to this paper provides a more detailed account of the stakeholder engagement.

Achieving Excellence for Young People – The Proposal

30. Taking into consideration the feedback received from stakeholders, the amount of quality provision already delivered by the voluntary, community, public and private sectors, national best practice, and the need to ensure value for money across all areas of the Council's provision, there is a substantive case for change.

31. Staffordshire County Council believes that, despite the increasing economic pressures on public services, more can be achieved for what is invested in young people by reforming our approach to deliver the three key outcomes for young people, enabling them to be:

- **Healthy and happy**
- **Safe and supported**
- **Independent and prosperous**

The achievement of these outcomes will help to prepare young people for adulthood in order that they may be **school ready, work ready and life ready**.

32. In order to achieve these outcomes the County Council must change how it works and proposes to focus its commissioning activities on three priority areas. Part of our future commissioning role would entail both influence and leadership to bring about change, as well as direct commissioning of services. The three areas have developed based upon the feedback received from young people on their priorities:

- **Enable access to excellent universal provision:**
 - Work with schools, colleges and other providers to ensure access to high quality education and training opportunities to give young people the skills to become work and life ready
 - Support Public Health campaigns to keep young people safe, healthy and well, for example through sexual health and alcohol education programmes
 - Improve access to transport to increase independence eg consideration of expansion of the Your Staffordshire Card to under 25 year olds
 - Ensure access to the right information, advice and guidance in order that young people are able to make informed choices, for example through Purple Pages and careers advice in schools and colleges.
 - Continue to support the Duke of Edinburgh, Bremen Exchange, V-Talent Contract and National Citizenship Schemes as a key part of our approach to increasing the employability, resilience and social and life skills of young people.
- **Commission high quality targeted and specialist services:**

- Maintain investment in services for vulnerable young people with the highest level of needs.
- Working through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board to jointly commission effective services for safeguarding, disability support, teenage pregnancy, substance misuse, youth offending and emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Continue to support the Family Intervention Project as part of the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme
- Review our other in-house provision and commissioned services for young people within the County Council, including Entrust, Families First Local Support Teams and the Youth Offending Service to ensure outcomes are achieved aligned to priorities
- **Make it local:**
 - Re-distribute resources and build community capacity in each district by allocating a District Commissioning Budget of £50,000
 - Support participation arrangements that will include a place shaping role to connect young people to opportunities in their communities,
 - Work with VAST to develop social capital through volunteering, making Staffordshire a better place to live and build resilient communities.
 - Undertake a review of the contract with Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services, to incorporate learning from the Northamptonshire model.
 - Review the existing property portfolio including the future management by the community of Chesterton Vision, aligned to the Strategic Property Partner project.

Appendices C and D to this paper provide a visualisation of this approach.

33. It is anticipated that this model can be delivered by a refocusing of resources to deliver what young people are telling us they want. This means a shift from more traditional universal provision whilst retaining investment in services for vulnerable young people and developing locality approaches. A number of alternative models have been considered during the process including reconfiguration of existing arrangements, commissioning a single provider, and total disinvestment. It is not thought that any of these approaches would enable the County Council to deliver on its future offer which seeks to balance help for the vulnerable whilst allowing the community, with transitional support, to meet the needs of its young people.

34. Through this proposed approach it is anticipated that MTFs savings of £2.8m in 2014/15 rising to £4.5m in 2020/21 could be achieved.

Next Steps

35. Subject to the acceptance of the recommendations of this report by Cabinet, the review would move on to Phase 2. There would be a seven week public consultation with young people and their families, key stakeholders (including communities) staff and volunteers, and trade unions on the above proposal and its implications. Subject to the recommendations in this report being accepted the public consultation is likely to start on January 8th 2014. Staffordshire County Council would consider any other alternative proposals put forward during the public consultation, subject to an appropriate business case. For more details please see the Engagement Plan, included as Appendix E to this paper.
36. The results of this public consultation would then contribute to the development of the proposal and a detailed appraisal that would go to Cabinet for approval in March 2014, along with an in depth Community Impact Assessment. A sufficiently high quality impact assessment is a high priority for this review, and would analyse all of the potential health and equalities impacts on all different groups of people in the community. An initial scoping of a Community Impact Assessment has been produced to accompany this report and inform future actions and has been included as Appendix F to this paper.
37. If Cabinet approve the recommendation made in March 2014, based on the impact assessment, this would signal the end of Phase 2 and the beginning of Phase 3 of this review. This would involve the implementation of the new Youth Offer.

List of Background Documents:

- Appendix A – SCYVS Audit of Provision - Summary
- Appendix B – Stakeholder Engagement Feedback Report
- Appendix C – Emerging Youth Offer (diagram)
- Appendix D – Commissioning Framework (diagram)
- Appendix E – Engagement Plan
- Appendix F – Initial Community Impact Assessment (November 2013)

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