
Report to
Cabinet

21 October 2008

Report of
Director of Children, Learning & Young People

Title
Improving Services for Young People

1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1 Outline the organisational framework for the revised service for young people which has been developed following a consultation on proposals that responded to the main findings of the Value for Money Review of Services for young people
- 1.2 Seek Cabinet's approval for taking forward specific proposals to improve services for young people and achieve the savings identified in the Value for Money Review.

2 Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to agree:

- 2.1 The organisational framework (see appendix 1) which was developed to deliver twelve key proposals agreed by Cabinet for consultation at their meeting on 12 August 2008.
- 2.2 That work outlined in paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7 is now taken forward to implement changes to the sessional work contracts within the service with the aim of making annual savings of £120,000
- 2.3 That the changes to the organisation of clerical and administrative staffing arrangements are implemented to achieve savings of £73,000
- 2.4 That work is progressed to implement the commissioning framework for services for young people with the aim of achieving savings over time of £96,000 on commissioning and £70,000 on other posts.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Following PriceWaterhouse Coopers' submission of their final report on the Value for Money Review (VfM) on services for young people, the VfM Programme Board

decided to accept the report and its recommendations as a basis to proceed. A consultation process was then agreed by Cabinet on 12 August which considered the key proposals which responded to the Value for Money report. The consultation involved staff, unions, stakeholders and young people. These proposals will lead to improved services for young people and savings of £73,000 on clerical and administration, £120,000 on sessional work (detailed figure following a review of contracts), at least £70,000 on 'other' posts and up to £96,000 saved through the process of commissioning. The total 2008/2009 budget of the Youth Service, from which this saving will be made, is £2,705,719. The recommendations clearly demonstrate the overall level of savings and how they will be achieved.

- 3.2 The minimum saving will meet the required £250,000 PPR 2008-2009 budget reduction. This sum was based on potential savings identified within the report produced by PriceWaterhouse Coopers as part of the tendering exercise for the Value for Money partnership. The more detailed work subsequently undertaken has developed how services can be further improved and additional savings of up to £110,000 can be made. Trade unions will be fully consulted when adjustments to the staffing establishment are proposed.
- 3.3 The main recommendation is to develop a commissioning model with a mixed economy of internally and externally delivered services and to implement other measures where efficiency savings have been identified and which will increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the Service.
- 3.4 A Project Team has now been established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. The actions that will lead to significant savings are outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 3.5 A communications and engagement strategy will involve young people in the design and decision-making of a detailed implementation plan on the proposals on the provision of positive activities which is a key strand of the service improvement work.
- 3.6 Consultation responses included comments that these measures would lead to: better coordination, a service that is driven by the needs of young people, greater clarity on provision for young people, less duplication and improved coverage for weekends. Conversely comments were made that these measures may lead to: an increase in administration for all staff, a reduction in 'youth work' with young people, sessional contracts being less appealing to potential staff, damaged relationships with schools and that quality assurance processes will be vital when commissioning services and evidencing why externally providers are chosen as opposed to internal provision.
- 3.7 The consultation responses reflect understandable concern from staff and stakeholders about what will be a very significant process of change. However, the overall aims and strategy behind the changes were broadly supported. Given the current development of Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS), which brings together Youth Services, Connexions, Youth Offending Services and a wide range of other provision for young people, it is also timely for a fundamental reshaping of services for young people. A commissioning model of services provides a vehicle to achieve this and improve efficiency, effectiveness and value for money at the same time.
- 3.8 Other factors such as the development of Extended Services in all secondary schools, and the commissioning processes developed through the Youth

Opportunities Fund and the Positive Activities for Young People programme, also provide an opportunity to rethink the type of provision that is required and how needs should be met.

4 Proposal and Other Option(s) to be Considered

- 4.1 It is proposed to move towards a mixed economy commissioning approach: other options considered were for the services to young people to be wholly commissioned with a third option to maintain the status quo.
- 4.2 A commissioning framework will be developed to enable a mixed economy of internally and externally delivered services. This framework will outline the clear requirements, outcomes, targets and standards expected of any organisation wishing to receive a commission. The Value for Money Review concluded that, when operational, the commissioning of activities would reduce costs by £96,000. The commissioning responsibilities will be built into the current role of the Neighbourhood Manager with responsibility for work with young people and the Integrated Service Managers will become the Strategy Managers. We will also draw upon the expertise of City Council staff already engaged in commissioning processes, e.g. the Joint Commissioning Unit within Strategic Services. The proposed structure, which has been costed within the overall reshaping of services, appears at appendix 1. The costs of the infrastructure to operate commissioning will be, in the medium term, met by savings derived from the commissioning approach. Within the consultation, there were comments that a quality assurance processes will be vital when commissioning services and evidencing why externally providers are chosen as the delivery agent, as opposed to internal provision. Trade Unions expressed concern that professional youth work standards should be maintained for activities provided through the commissioning process and that quality and standards should be assured through the use of professionally trained staff.
- 4.3 It is also proposed to further develop the structure for the new Integrated Youth Support Service and to consider what elements of services for young people within the City should be part of this structure. Additionally, it must be ensured that these emerging structures continue to integrate with Neighbourhood Services in order that there is a coherent and holistic approach to achieving better outcomes for children and young people. The proposals will ensure that the delivery of services is local and focused on those outcomes specified within Every Child Matters and Youth Matters and located within Coventry's strategy for Promoting Children and Young People's Well-Being.
- 4.4 The organisational structure diagram appears as **appendix 1** which shows the relationship with Neighbourhood Services and the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS). **Appendix 2** shows a diagram of the shape of the emerging IYSS. This model dovetails with developing structures and strengthens the integrated approaches of Neighbourhood Services and the IYSS. These structures will lead to a more coherent organisational structure, consistent approaches and better outcomes for young people. No concerns were raised, within the consultation, about this development.
- 4.5 The proposed structure also takes into account other important developments such as commissioning. For example, the current posts of Integrated Service Managers will have a focus on strategic planning, particularly in relation to analysis of local

need and the specifications of requirements which will be integral to the activity of effective commissioning.

- 4.6 Following the Value for Money Review it was concluded that savings of £120,000 on sessional contracts could be achieved through a process of reviewing both the contracts and the establishment. There is currently an establishment of 32.4 full-time equivalent (FTE's) part-time sessional workers: the maximum expected reduction in sessional establishment is 9.3 FTE's. Sessional workers currently have Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC) terms, conditions and pay rates: this is a national agreement which has been adopted by the vast majority of Local Authorities. However, there are sessional staff working within the Local Authority that provide programmes of positive activities and/or targeted support and/or advice and guidance to young people that are paid on Local Authority rates, terms and conditions, e.g. Youth Offending Service, Culture & Leisure. These contracts offer the flexibility and value for money that needs to be applied within all services for young people. Trade Unions expressed strong concern that this may lead to 'detrimental changes to current terms and conditions'
- 4.7 Savings will be made by a combination of actions including consideration of a shift to Local Authority rates (which will also address inequalities in pay rates), standardising the numbers of weeks worked over a year, varying the length of delivery sessions as appropriate, reviewing the time allocation for planning and reviewing (15 minutes at the start and end of sessions), reviewing the allocation for staff development and residential work, eliminating under-used youth work sessions, reducing the establishment where commissions will operate and ensuring a cost effective 'staff to young person' ratio. Trade Unions will be fully consulted about these changes. Until the review of sessional contracts is complete, it is not possible to arrive at a precise saving. However, from what we know already from the review, the reduction to the sessional budget will be £120,000 and potentially up to £176,000. This saving will not be achieved during the 2008-2009 financial year. Within the consultation, concerns were raised about the fact that new sessional contracts may no longer be attractive to existing employees and potential recruits.
- 4.8 The PriceWaterhouse Coopers report concluded that there is a good deal of overlap, duplication and unnecessary activity performed within 'backroom' functions with areas of work such as needs analysis and data collection: it could be significantly more cost effective to focus these tasks around a centralised and streamlined administration and clerical team. The PWC report outlined a planned reduction of the 'backroom' resource by 3.6 staff from 9.6 staff securing a saving of up to £73,000. This will involve a review of the role of administration and clerical work, the establishment of a centralised team, improving arrangements for task allocation, workload planning and workload management and streamlining of citywide functions such as data collection and needs analysis. The consultation raised concerns about the sufficiency of a reduced administration and clerical team and about job security for existing staff. It was expressed that there will be additional responsibilities for 'backroom staff' such as data collection whilst staffing would be reduced and that current 'backroom resources' were insufficient to run the Service.
- 4.9 Cabinet is asked to endorse this approach to improving the effectiveness of the deployment of support staff in the service.
- 4.10 The Value for Money Review commented that there was very little on offer in terms of positive activities for young people at weekends and holiday periods despite some young people expressing that this is what they required. Currently, there is very little

weekend work except for occasional residential and project work and some day trips. Resources tend to be focused on weekday evenings at the expense of making provision at weekends and during holiday periods. Though there is a good programme of holiday activity, this resource could be increased if resources were moved from elsewhere. It has therefore been decided to consult young people on their preferred times for service provision: both attenders and non-attenders will be consulted. Young people will be given all of the information necessary (the scope and boundaries of their choices) to make a realistic choice, e.g. the number of sessions that they can allocate. This strategy will not lead to any financial savings though it is expected that it will lead to an increase in the numbers engaging, thus providing better value for money. Where new sessions open at weekends, weekday sessions will have to close. It is expected that 'take-up' will be increased through increased and improved promotion of positive activities. This process of ensuring that services operate at the times that young people prefer will be assisted by the use of commissioning services where this can not be achieved through internal provision. The consultation revealed significant support for this action though Trade Unions said that their members did not believe that this shift in operational times would be utilised or required by young people. Trade Unions also commented that youth workers are not activity co-ordinators but operate programmes that assist and support young people in their transition to adulthood.

- 4.11 These developments will be based on a thorough analysis of need of young people, the identification and filling of gaps in provision, more joined up and integrated working, the elimination of duplication and better targeting of resources and value for money.

5 Other specific implications

5.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People	✓	
Climate Change & Sustainable Development		X
Comparable Benchmark Data		X
Corporate Parenting	✓	
Coventry Community Plan	✓	
Crime and Disorder	✓	
Equal Opportunities	✓	
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety		X
Human Resources	✓	
Human Rights Act		X
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Information and Communications Technology		X
Legal Implications	✓	
Neighbourhood Management		X
Property Implications		X
Race Equality Scheme		X
Risk Management		X
Trade Union Consultation	✓	
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		X

5.2 **Best Value**

The City Council is committed to delivering Value for Money through the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of its Services. The Council's VfM partnership has increased the Council's capacity to undertake service reviews in ways which are consistent with the Council's Value for Money strategy, and which are seeking to deliver service improvement and cost reduction.

5.3 **Children & Young People**

It is intended to ensure that there is better targeting of resources leading to improved services and outcomes.

5.4 **Corporate Parenting**

An important requirement for the commissioned service is that it is able to respond effectively to the needs of children and young people who are looked after or have been looked after by Coventry City Council or other local authorities and living in Coventry. This very vulnerable children and young people are an important target group for Integrated Youth Support Services and the revised service specifications on which commissioning of service will be based will need to reflect this.

5.5 **Community Plan**

The proposals of this report will enable services for young people to enhance the contribution to the objectives of the Community Plan.

5.6 **Crime and Disorder**

The implementation of the recommendations will ensure that services for young people will be better targeted at young people who are currently disengaged, disadvantaged, hard to reach, and at risk of drifting into anti-social and /or criminal behaviours.

5.7 **Equal Opportunities**

The proposals will ensure that available funds will be more effectively targeted at the most disadvantaged communities through more thorough needs analysis and more effective deployment of resources.

5.8 **Finance**

The decision was made, as part of the 2008/09 budget-setting process, to approve a saving of £250,000 on the Youth Service budget in response to an initial report prepared as part of the Value for Money programme tendering exercise. Due to time constraints it is unlikely

that the saving will be achieved in the 2008/09 financial year. The impact of this will need to be monitored as part of the ongoing budgetary control process.

5.9 Human Resources

It is proposed that the contracts of sessional youth work staff will be reviewed, unfunded posts will be deleted from the establishment, the resources allocated for 'back room' activity will be reduced, there will be more flexibility in the deployment of all staffing resources, there will be a process of external commissioning and there will be savings made on the staffing resource. It is expected that these proposals will lead to a reduction in the establishment and in staffing, and a change in sessional contracts. Full consultation with staff and trade unions will be undertaken. The City Council's Security of Employment agreement will be observed.

5.10 Impact on Partner Organisations

All agencies working with young people will have the opportunity to bid for commissions to deliver work with young people. Key partners, such as the Connexions, Youth Offending Services, secondary schools and the voluntary sector will be consulted.

5.11 Legal Implications

There will be legal implications to consider with the reduction of staffing and the modification of existing contracts. The commissioning of services will need to take account of the legal framework which commissioning and contracting services requires the Council to observe.

5.12 Trade Union Consultation

The appropriate trade unions will be consulted about all of the plans to emerge out of the Value for Money review as there are significant staffing implications that will impact upon their members.

6. Monitoring

The Project Team will monitor progress.

7. Timescale and expected outcomes

7.1 It is expected that the key benefits of this approach will include: a better focus on outcomes for young people; greater flexibility in the times and places that services are delivered; costs savings achieved through the process of commissioning; more efficient needs analysis and planning; a reduction in resources required for non face to face delivery functions and improved cost effectiveness in the employment of sessional staff through a review of contract arrangements. It is planned to make all adjustments by March 2009, after which the full savings will be achieved.

	Yes	No
Key Decision	√	
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)	Scrutiny Board 2	√
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		√

List of background papers: Gate 2 Business Case: Services for Young People

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