



Northumberland

County Council

Families and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6th December 2018

Youth Service Review

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, Cath McEvoy

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Wayne Daley

Purpose of report

Following the previous report to members in January 2018 this paper provides a further update on the work undertaken on implementing the recommendations of the Youth Service Review. It contains details of the proposed delivery model moving forward, the effect this will have on staff employed in the youth service and the work which is being undertaken to work with communities who may be affected by the proposed changes.

It provides a rationale for the changes and the benefits of the proposed new model and which communities and target populations of young people will benefit from the proposed changes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 1) Members support the proposed changes to the youth service.
- 2) Members identify any areas for additional scrutiny if appropriate.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the Connecting, Living and Learning priorities included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

Key Issues

1. The plan is to remodel the Youth Service back to one service as opposed to three based on geographical area.
2. The number of hours of frontline youth service delivery in Northumberland will remain in line with what is currently delivered. Proposed changes will have an impact on management arrangements and focus of work delivered.
3. To remodel Northumberland Youth Service so it is far better embedded within the framework of the early help, prevention and targeted support agenda and can provide proactive support when required or directed.
4. A high level audit has been carried out following the review paper and has identified which provision demonstrates most direct benefit to young people. This will involve refocusing provision to operate predominantly in areas of high need as defined by multiple indices such as deprivation.
5. To work closely with both rural and urban communities where need is not deemed as high to assist in the development of sustainable and effective youth projects.
6. The recommendations in relation to participation have already started to be implemented as a result of a manager and staff leaving providing the opportunity to combine the previous two services and start to develop the work of the new team.
7. Review of the Youth Service's delivery of the National Citizen Service programme in April 2019 has been completed and the decision made that the Youth Service will not continue to deliver this in Northumberland going forward.

Youth Service Review

1. What is the proposal?

1.1 In October 2017 a Youth Service review was conducted by the Assistant Director for Children's Services (Prevention and Early Help) in North Tyneside. Its key finding was that there is a need for a fundamental restructure of the Youth Service in Northumberland to bring it in line with the wider strategic objectives of Children's Services and the Council. This would enable it to deliver effective and outcome focussed services for young people in Northumberland.

1.2 Following the review and a subsequent high level audit of current provision the following proposals are made:

- To remodel the Youth Service back to one service as opposed to three based on geographical area. This will help focus on core delivery aspects and lead to greater financial cohesion by having one budget with sub codes based on delivery strategy (Early Help / Participation etc.). Staff will be re-deployed to delivery "strands" to ensure consistency of approach and clarity of delivery.
- To remodel Northumberland Youth Service so it is far better embedded within the framework of the early help, prevention and targeted support agenda and can provide proactive support when required or directed. This will increase the proportion of referrals to the Youth Service which result in an Early Help Assessment and Plan, as defined by the Early Help Strategy 2018-21.
- Re-focussing Youth Service Provision to operate predominantly in areas of high need as defined by multiple indices such as deprivation. This will concentrate the service delivery to specific geographic areas as identified from the audit.
- To work closely with both rural and urban communities where need is not deemed as high to assist in the development of sustainable and effective youth projects. These will aim to be self determined and governed by the communities themselves and organisations within them. This is an expansion of the current rural rationale and its "grow your own" strand.
- The development of a coherent Management Information System that effectively assesses need, records and demonstrates impact and links effectively to other services as required.
- Staff departures have made it possible to progress recommendations made in the review report about the amalgamation of the two participation teams which previously operated and the new participation team would be looking to continue to develop based on identified areas.
- For the youth service to no longer deliver the National Citizenship Service (NCS) programme. The ongoing costs of delivering this are no longer covered by the funding received from the programme and the proposed

changed focus of the youth service would mean that youth service resource would be used to deliver holiday activities to more targeted groups of young people.

2. Proposed Delivery Model

2.1 The proposal is designed to retain front line staff who work with young people. However some of them may be asked to relocate in accordance with the need for more targeted work in identified areas of need. Proposed changes have been determined through a needs assessment completed by the service and ongoing consultation with young people and key stakeholders.

2.2 The needs assessment looked at:

- Population statistics for each area
- Deprivation figures for each area
- Assessment of quality of provision in each area

2.3 The proposed changes would see a change or reduction in Northumberland County Council funded youth provision in the following areas:

- Alnwick
- Morpeth
- Ponteland
- Prudhoe
- Hexham
- Haltwhistle

2.5 Work has already begun in those areas with the local town councils, voluntary organisations and others to support and develop alternative youth service provision as detailed below:

- Alnwick - Developing Capacity with Community at NE66 at Alnwick Community Centre - we are already working towards this with their trustees.
- Morpeth - Greater support of Barnabus Safe and Sound based in Stobhill, Morpeth.
- Ponteland - We are currently working with the Town Council to see what form youth provision in the area will take.
- Prudhoe - Working with the Town Council and local community once the asset transfer of the East Centre is completed. Prominent community figures have indicated they would like to see a voluntary youth initiative such as Hexham and Corbridge.
- Hexham - Developing Capacity / Outcomes with Hexham Youth Initiative
- Haltwhistle - Developing Capacity / Outcomes with Young and Sweet

2.6 We will however be placing greater resources in areas of high need and larger populations centres such as:

- Ashington
- Blyth
- Bedlington

2.7 Whereas previously the youth service work was divided on a geographical basis the proposal is that it will be re-focussed around three 'strands', namely:

- Prevention Strand
- Early Help Strand
- Participation Strand

2.8 This will see a uniformity of approach and a better sharing of working practices.

2.9 In total approximately forty youth support and youth worker posts will be retained and three more senior posts will be reduced. This process has already begun through natural reduction when staff have left the service.

2.10 A formal consultation process with staff and unions has been undertaken with staff and concluded in September 2018. Alongside this views were sought from young people and voluntary sector partners. All are broadly in support of the proposal.

2.11 Changes to the service will result in savings efficiencies with an overall 73% reduction in the management team costs and a 19% reduction in the participation service costs without reducing the number of staff delivering work with young people.

3. Conclusion

3.1 This is an exciting time for the Youth Service and this document showcases a forward thinking approach. It will provide a dynamic Service that fulfils its role within Northumberland Adolescent Service and Northumberland County Council. It will best meet the needs of the young people across the County who depend on us most.

3.2 The new Service has been designed to be more efficient whilst retaining front line delivery. The efficiencies offered here are the Youth Service's contribution to wider savings across the Council.

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	The proposed structure and service provision is based in the current government focus on early help and prevention.
Finance and value for money:	The new model represents much greater value for money and encourages communities to be self-sustaining.
Legal:	NA
Procurement:	NA
Human Resources:	HR are involved in the discussions and communications around the restructure process. There is a formal consultation process with staff and unions which concluded in September which set out the selection process for posts should the proposed changes be accepted and has been amended in line with feedback received from staff. The proposal looks at changes and reductions in current management posts. Should this proposal be agreed by members then an implementation timeline will be issued to staff and unions.
Property:	NA
Equalities: (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> to be completed	
Risk Assessment:	This will be completed.
Crime & Disorder:	The model will allow for youth workers to provide targeted intervention where needed to prevent anti-social behaviour.
Customer Considerations:	Young people and other stakeholders have been consulted both before and during the formal staff consultation process and will be part of the design of new service delivery.
Carbon Reduction:	NA
Wards:	All

Report sign off

Finance Officer	N/A
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A

Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Executive Director of Children's Services	CM
Portfolio Holder(s)	WD

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Appendix 1 Current Youth Service Structure

Appendix 2 - Proposed Structure