



Cabinet  
18<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Item

## **Local Commissioning of Youth Activities - Proposals for consultation on changes to the funding of targeted geographical provision**

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### **1. Summary**

At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 Cabinet recommended that proposals for the future commissioning of youth activities – universal support, geographically targeted support and thematically targeted support - should be reviewed by the Young People’s Scrutiny Committee, and that recommendations should be brought back to Cabinet.

A Task & Finish Group met three times and heard a variety of evidence from Local Joint Committees (LJCs), youth activity providers, youth forums, the Council’s Infrastructure Support Provider partner, neighbouring local authorities, potential “partner organisations” and others. Subsequently at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017, the Young People’s Scrutiny Committee confirmed the positive impact of youth work, universal and targeted, on young people’s lives, and made a number of recommendations.

Since Scrutiny confirmed its recommendations, the Council has reiterated the need to make significant budget cuts. This Cabinet report, and its recommendations, is written in this context.

This report highlights the proposals made by Scrutiny to introduce revised funding proposals in support of geographically targeted youth activity provision from April 2018. These proposals are based on (1) a simplified “funding formula”; (2) local intelligence and understanding; and (3) a desire to support local sustainable provision free from direct Council support in recognition of the ongoing financial pressures.

Working on the basis of a reduction to the existing budget from £234,950 to £135,000 (i.e. 43%) the six LJC areas with the greatest identified needs – Shrewsbury, Market Drayton, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Whitchurch and Ludlow - would be allocated funding. This compares with eighteen LJC areas currently receiving funding. The reduction in the number of LJC areas receiving funding results from the proposed removal of rurality funding from 12 existing LJCs, and the refocussing of resources to the main market towns where the needs are greatest.

We are now seeking permission from Cabinet to consult on these new proposals, prior to returning to Cabinet with final recommendations.

It should be noted that alongside ongoing support for limited geographically targeted provision, the Council will continue to engage an “infrastructure support provider”, the Shropshire Youth Association (working with Energize), to support the development of safe and effective voluntary sector youth club providers. Community Enablement Team Officers will also continue to provide proactive support to local youth clubs to access funding and provide sustainable delivery.

With an eye on the long-term future, it is recommended that work is undertaken with a broad range of interested partners over the next 18 months to develop an integrated approach to the provision of universal and targeted youth activities within the context of a wider review of Early Help provision. The provision of youth activities cuts across a range of programmes (including the Strengthening Families programme) that work with the whole family and actively support young people away from crime, anti-social behaviour, and risky behaviours, and ensure that young people feel listened to, valued and thrive in the communities where they live.

Scrutiny recognised that new arrangements need to be developed to enable young people to participate in and influence key decisions that potentially affect them. This review will be reported on in due course.

## **2. Recommendations**

- A. To comment on and confirm detailed proposals for a revised “funding formula” and Local Joint Committee funding allocations in support of targeted geographical youth activity provision from 2018/19 onwards; and to confirm that a public consultation is undertaken on the new funding proposals.
- B. To confirm a delegation to the Director of Place and Enterprise in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People to finalise the public consultation before a report is brought back to Cabinet with final recommendations.
- C. To note the intention to work with a broad range of interested partners over the next 18 months to develop an integrated approach to the provision of universal and targeted youth activities within the context of a wider review of early help provision.
- D. To acknowledge the work carried out by the Task and Finish Group and reported at the Young People’s Scrutiny Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

## **REPORT**

### **1.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 1.1 Local authorities have a duty to secure, so far as reasonably practical, equality of access for all young people aged 13 to 19 (24 for those with learning difficulties). The “local offer” should be the best possible to meet local needs and to improve young people’s well-being and personal and social development within available resources. Local authorities must also take steps to gain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them.

Visit: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/15549/1/statutory%20guidance%20on%20la%20youth%20provision%20duty.pdf>

Our assessment is that within the context of diminished resources and a large rural county the Council will meet its statutory requirements provision through the recommendations made within this report.

- 1.2 However, the Council is currently less effective at taking the views of young people into account in making and reviewing decisions about provision, particularly at a county wide, strategic level. Previously Members of The Youth Parliament and Speak Out Group were among a number of initiatives, which helped young people to share their thoughts, opinions and ideas. These are no longer in place in Shropshire.
- 1.3 An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) has been prepared and is included as **Appendix 1**. Limiting funding to fewer areas than previously has the potential to result in a negative impact to young people in areas where funding is potentially withdrawn and existing youth club provision could be in doubt.

The Council will continue to engage an “infrastructure support provider”, the Shropshire Youth Association (working with Energize), to support the development of safe and effective voluntary sector youth club providers. Community Enablement Team Officers will also continue to support local youth clubs to access funding and provide sustainable delivery.

The consultation on the proposals for more limited targeted geographical support, will provide valuable feedback on the likely impact on young people in Protected Characteristic groupings, and will inform a review of the ESIIA and confirmation of our approach to the local commissioning of youth activities.

Should any specific local challenges arise because of the proposed reduction in funding, the Council will consider what transitional support it may be able to provide.

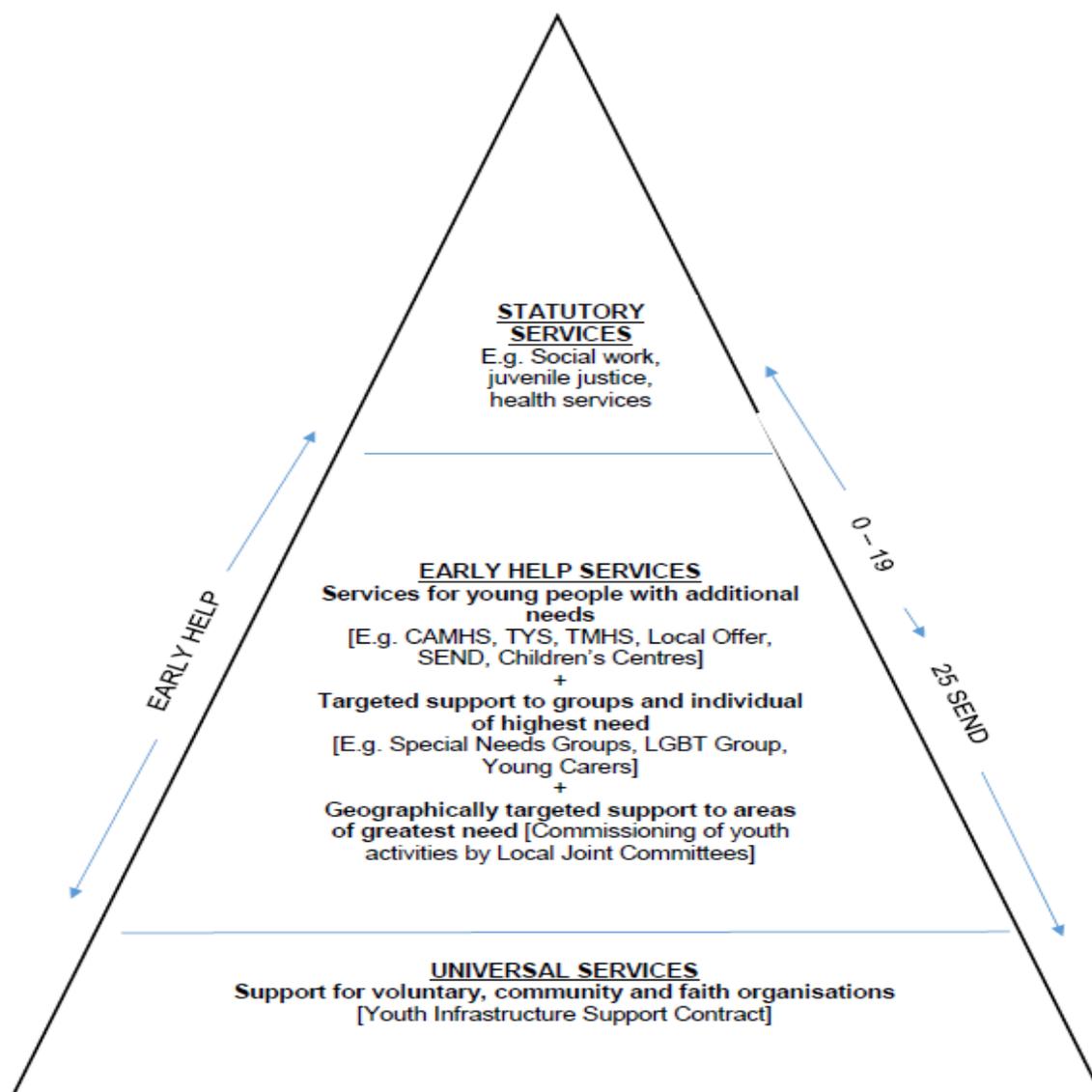
- 1.4 Child safeguarding and welfare matters are paramount in our approach and appropriate safeguards will continue to be included in all arrangements.  
Visit: <http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/scb/>
- 1.5 Supporting early help and early prevention is a key driver for the Council<sup>1</sup>. Support for youth activities as a “universal offer” alongside more targeted support for young people with particular needs underpins the Council’s approach to commissioning support for young people. We have shown this diagrammatically in figure 1<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Shropshire Early Help Strategy, helping children have a safe, happy and healthy family life, June, Shropshire Council, 2014

<sup>2</sup> A note on abbreviations: CAMHS = Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service; TYS = Targeted Youth Support; TMHS = Targeted Mental Health Support Team; SEND = Special Education Needs & Disability; LGBT = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

Figure 1



## 2.0 Financial implications

2.1 The table below shows both the available Council budget from April 2017 and the proposed budget from April 2018 across the three overlapping areas of youth activity - infrastructure support, geographically targeted provision, and Special Needs Groups.

	Budget from April 2017	Proposed budget from April 2018
Infrastructure support	£97,500 (25.7%)	£97,500 (35%)
Geographically targeted provision	£234,950 (62%)	£135,000 (48%)
Special Needs Groups	£46,500 (12.3%)	£46,500 (17%)
	<b>£378,950</b>	<b>£279,000</b>

- 2.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed by full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 confirmed the requirement to make a 50% saving to the budget for targeted youth activity provision from 2017/18 onwards, leaving an available budget of £117,475 per annum.
- 2.3 Cabinet at its meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 recommended that, pending the outcomes of the work of the Task and Finish Group, funding should be maintained at its current level, i.e. £234,950, until the end of December 2017. This level of funding has been further committed until the end of March 2018.
- 2.4 Subsequent to this, the Council has reconfirmed the requirement to make a significant budget reduction in line with its Medium Term Financial Strategy. The proposals within this report would result in a reduction in the budget for geographically targeted provision from £234,950 to £135,000 (i.e. 43 %) from April 2018.

### **3.0 Scrutiny and Task & Finish Group**

- 3.1 The report (excluding the detailed appendices) considered by the Young People's Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017 is included as **Appendix 2**. A copy of the full Scrutiny report can be viewed at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=313&MId=3574&Ver=4>
- 3.2 In confirming recommendations, Scrutiny considered the outcome of a Task and Finish Group, which met three times in early 2017. The Group heard from a range of different activity providers and youth partnerships and considered a range of evidence and information including:
  - The impact on need resulting from the local commissioning of youth activities (to areas of geographical need)
  - A review of different delivery options
  - The interest of potential "strategic partners" in supporting the ongoing provision of youth activities
- 3.3. Scrutiny confirmed the following recommendations at its meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017:
  - A. To confirm the recommendations made by the Task & Finish Group at its meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 as detailed below.
  - B. To comment on and confirm detailed proposals for funding allocations in support of youth activity provision that respond to local need from 2018/19 onwards.
  - C. To note work underway on the development of opportunities and approaches for the input and review by young people in strategic and local commissioning decisions.
- 3.4 Since the conclusion of this work, officers recommend that further savings are made due to the financial challenges that the Council continues to face. In setting out our approach below we have used as our reference point comments made within the Cabinet report of the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016, "Our suggested approach to maximising the value of future funding (in support of positive activities) is

based on targeting funding to those areas where previous intelligence has confirmed that the “specific needs” are the highest.”

#### **4.0 Geographically targeted support**

- 4.1 Geographically targeted support is delivered via a local commissioning approach. LJsCs, together with young people and supported by the Community Enablement Team, are responsible for making commissioning recommendations. LJsCs base their recommendations on a consideration of local needs, an understanding of existing youth provision, conversations with young people and stakeholders, and their local knowledge. Community Enablement Team officers support LJsCs with this work and are responsible for procuring youth activity within the Councils’ Constitution and Contract and Financial Rules.

In Shrewsbury, the full responsibility for the commissioning and delivery of youth activities has been transferred within a formal delegation agreement from Shropshire Council to Shrewsbury Town Council.

- 4.2 As part of the Scrutiny / Task and Finish group process a review of the process for the allocation of funding in support of geographically targeted youth provision was undertaken. This is reported on in detail in appendix 2 of the Scrutiny Committee report of the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017. This can be viewed at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=313&MId=3574&Ver=4>

The review recommends a revised and simplified funding formula based on two measures (rather than the current nine measures), calculated for individual LJC areas:

- Young people aged 10 to 19 years old in receipt of Free School Meals
- The relative number of 10 to 19 year olds in a LJC area

Free School Meals is an established proxy measure for deprivation and is correlated with a range of needs; it is, for example, used by the Department for Education to calculate Pupil Premium levels for schools. The number of 10 to 19 year older children allows for population size differences in individual LJC areas.

The proposed measures no longer make specific reference to rurality. Previously rurality funding did not necessarily correlate with need and in the main there is no strong evidence that funding has been spent on overcoming issues of rural isolation.

- 4.3 In allocating funding and establishing the value of the total funding pot, we have considered:
- On-going pressures on the Council’s budget, and the requirement set out within the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy to make a 50% saving to the budget allocated for targeted youth activity provision.
  - Where the evidence shows us that the need for funding in support of better outcomes for potentially vulnerable young people is the greatest.
  - How many youth clubs / activities the Council should be supporting and where Council support to create and sustain local activity is most needed.

- The actual cost, based on our experience, for providing fully staffed youth clubs.
- The Council's commitment to supporting the development of sustainable youth activity provision free, where possible, from direct Council financial support.

4.4 We have considered a number of options for the future allocation of a reduced funding pot and propose that funding is limited to areas with a needs score greater than 5.0%. This would limit funding to the main market towns, where evidence suggests that the need is the greatest, and there is the least possibility of provision being picked up locally independent of Council support, at least in the short term.

4.5 This is summarised below.

Local Joint Committee Area (in descending order of needs score)	Rurality Funding 2014	Needs Funding 2014		Proposed Needs Funding 2018		
		Needs funding	No of youth clubs supported	Needs score	Proposed no of youth clubs to be supported	Proposed needs funding
<b>Partner delivery commissioned by Shropshire Council</b>						
Shrewsbury		√	7	15.1%	5	45,000
Market Drayton		√	2	6.6%	2	18,000
Oswestry		√	4	6.0%	2	18,000
Bridgnorth, Worfield, Alveley and Claverley	√	√	2	5.6%	2	18,000
Whitchurch		√	2	5.1%	2	18,000
Ludlow and Clee area		√	2	5.0%	2	18,000
<b>Community provision supported by the Shropshire Youth Association</b>						
Wem and Shawbury	√	√	2	4.6%		
Craven Arms and Rural	√			4.1%		
Bishop's Castle, Chirbury, Worthen and Clun	√			3.0%		
Ellesmere	√			3.9%		
Gobowen, Selattyn, St Martin's, and Weston Rhyn		√	3	3.9%		
Longden, Ford, Rea Valley and Loton	√	√	2	3.8%		
Shifnal and Sheriffhales				3.4%		
Five Perry Parishes				3.3%		
Broseley and Rural				3.2%		
Tern and Severn Valley	√			3.2%		
St Oswald	√			3.1%		
Albrighton				3.1%		
Strettondale and Burnell	√			3.0%		
Highley and Brown Clee	√			2.8%		

Cleobury and Rural	√			2.5%		
Much Wenlock and Shipton	√			2.4%		
Bayston Hill				2.4%		
<b>Total funding</b>						<b>135,000</b>

Although we have suggested funding allocations based on support for a defined number of youth clubs in each of six LJC areas, individual LJCs may wish to spend the money differently. What is important is that the money responds to local need and supports the long-term financial sustainability of youth club provision independently of Shropshire Council.

- 4.6 The Council is committed to supporting the development of sustainable youth activity provision free, where possible, from direct Council financial support. This reflects the ongoing challenging financial context. It also provides the best chance for the long-term provision of youth activities to be embedded within the local community, using the resources of that community.

Council supported youth activity provision aims to be inclusive to children and young people of varying needs, while recognising that this will sometimes require bespoke support. For example, a number of dedicated groups provide opportunities for young people who have a disability (Special Needs Groups), are LGBT or are young carers, and who might otherwise find it difficult to attend mainstream clubs, groups or facilities.

The Council will continue to fund the Shropshire Youth Association and Energize to provide proactive support to youth clubs across Shropshire. We recognise this as being crucial to the long-term sustainability of an active and dynamic voluntary community sector.

- 4.7 We plan to run a six-week public consultation on the proposals set out within this report, based around an online survey. We will particularly target consultation at clubs that might be potentially at risk of closure. Audiences and approaches will include:
- Young people and their parents and carers attending youth clubs supported by the Council. The survey will be promoted to young people through youth clubs and social media
  - Providers delivering youth clubs supported by the Council.
  - Local Joint Committees and Shropshire Council Members and town and parish councils. Publicise via SALC bulletin and direct email to Council members
  - Council officers involved in commissioning and delivery of services for children and young people in Shropshire
  - Voluntary and community sector youth clubs. Publicise via SYA newsletter
  - “Partner” organisations with an interest in the benefits of youth provision including CCG, P&C Commissioner, etc.

Once we have completed the consultation we will review and update our Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment, prior to taking a further report to Cabinet.

## 5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The revised funding proposals will result in 6 LJs receiving a funding allocation rather than the current 18 areas. This results from the proposed removal of rurality funding allocations and the refocussing of resources to the main market towns where the needs of young people are the greatest.
- 5.2 We acknowledge that the proposals made in this report to limit funding to a small number of areas could have a negative impact to young people, particularly in circumstances where existing youth clubs might have to stop. This is why we want to consult with LJs, youth activity providers, stakeholders and young people, before reviewing our ESIA and confirming final recommendations. Should any specific local challenges arise, Shropshire Council may consider what transitional support could be provided.
- 5.3 The Council's Infrastructure Support Provider partner will continue to provide proactive support for universal youth activity provision within existing contractual arrangements. Its focus will be on supporting clubs that have no alternative support and are vulnerable to potential closure. The Infrastructure Support Provider will continue to work with Community Enablement Team Officers and local partners to develop new clubs in response to local need.
- 5.4 Further work will be undertaken to review arrangements for enabling young people to participate in and influence local and strategic decisions that potentially affect their lives.

### **List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Future vision for youth support services in Shropshire, Cabinet, 8 December 2010  
Shropshire Children's Trust Children, Young People and Families Plan 2014  
Changes to Youth Services, Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 30 April 2014  
Future Commissioning and provision of youth activities, Portfolio Holder Decision, 2 July 2014  
Update – Future Commissioning and Provision of youth activities, Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 22 October 2014  
Local Joint Committees – Update on youth commission and boundaries, Cabinet, 10 December 2014  
Youth Commissioning Update, Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 24 June 2015  
Delegation of the responsibility for the commissioning and delivery of youth services within Shrewsbury to Shrewsbury Town Council and recommendations for Broseley Youth Club, Cabinet, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015  
Support for Youth Activities update, Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 4 November 2015  
Support for Youth Activities update, Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 3 February 2016  
Proposals for the future commissioning of youth activities within the context of reduced funding, Cabinet, 19 October 2016  
Proposals for the creation of a Task & Finish Group to consider the local commissioning of youth activities, Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 14 December 2016  
Recommendations for the future commissioning of youth activities, Young People Task & Finish Group, 26 April 2017  
Report from the Task & Finish Group on the future commissioning of youth activities, Young People's Scrutiny Committee, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017

<b>Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Nick Bardsley – Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
<b>Local Members:</b> All Members
<b>Appendices:</b> Appendix 1 – ESIIA, Local Commissioning of Youth Activities: proposals for consultation on changes to funding of targeted geographical provision Appendix 2 – Report to the Young People’s Scrutiny Committee (excluding appendices), 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2017