



<u>Committee and Date</u>
<b>Performance Management Scrutiny Committee</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
<b>Cabinet</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2018

<u>Item</u>
<b>6</b>
Public

**Local commissioning of youth activities - proposals for changes to the funding of targeted geographical provision**

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**1. Summary**

A report was brought to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017 with proposals to change the arrangements for the future commissioning of youth activities. It was agreed by Cabinet to consult on the proposals made within the report.

A public consultation on the proposed changes to the Local Joint Committee (LJC) funding allocations to support the commissioning of youth activity ended on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

335 individual responses plus responses from youth groups and local councils were received. The vast majority of these responses were not in agreement with the proposals within the consultation. A summary of the responses can be found at 4.0 within this report and the full feedback is attached as Appendix 1

The consultation feedback demonstrated that there was strong support for the council continuing to fund youth activities in rural areas, keeping rurality considerations in the funding formula and continuing to offer grants to small voluntary clubs.

The feedback also showed that whilst respondees would like to see all the council's funding for youth activities continue at current levels, they particularly would like funding in rural areas to be protected.

In the context of reduced available budget it is proposed that there is a reduction in the funding for activities in some of our largest market towns. A number of the larger town councils have suggested that they are in a position to financially support youth activities in their area.

It is proposed that the current rurality grants are brought together into one centrally held pot that groups and clubs delivering activity in LJC areas currently eligible for rurality funding can bid into. The application process would need clear criteria and an assessment process that continues to involve local elected members and the LJCs.

## **2. Recommendations**

- A. To acknowledge the feedback from the recent consultation on the LJC funding allocations for the commissioning of youth activity proposed in the Cabinet Report of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017
- B. To confirm the proposed LJC funding allocations for the commissioning of youth activities in 2018/19 that have been revised as a result of the feedback received through the consultation (as detailed at 5.9 within the report)
- C. To approve the intention to work with partners over the next 12 months to develop an integrated approach to the provision of universal and targeted youth activities within the context of the wider review of early help services, recognising that there will be new arrangements from 2019/20 onwards, which could include a further budgetary reduction.
- D. To confirm a delegation to the Head of Infrastructure and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People to confirm the final design of the revised rurality needs grant scheme

## **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 is meeting its statutory requirements with respect to provision.

- 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 updated and is available on request. Reducing funding in some of the market towns has the potential to result in a negative impact to young people. However, arrangements to enable additional funding that will mitigate these proposed reductions will be discussed with the relevant town councils.

If this additional funding can be secured we do not anticipate that any clubs currently supported by the Council through the local commissioning approach will need to close because of the funding proposals outlined within this report.

Should any specific local challenges arise, the Council will consider what transitional support it may be able to provide.

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.

- 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.

## 2.0 Financial implications

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

	<b>Budget from April 2017</b>
Infrastructure support	£97,500 (25.7%)
Geographically targeted provision	£234,950 (62%)
Special Needs Groups	£46,500 (12.3%)
	<b>£378,950</b>

- 2.2 In the context of reduced available budget the proposals within this report would result in a reduction in the budget for geographically targeted provision from £234,950 in 2017/18 to £174,500 in 2018/19.

## 3.0 Background

- 3.1 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.

- 3.2 A Task & Finish Group met three times and heard a variety of evidence from LJsCs, youth activity providers, youth forums, the Council’s Infrastructure

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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

Support Provider partner, neighbouring local authorities, potential “partner organisations” and others.

3.3 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.

3.4 The Scrutiny Committee recommended back to Cabinet that work was 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.

3.5 The proposals made by Scrutiny were to introduce revised funding proposals in support of geographically targeted youth activity provision from April 2018. These proposals were based on a simplified “funding formula” and local intelligence, described within a proposed “hierarchy of Council support for youth provision”. The consequences of this approach would have been a reduction in the number of LJs allocated money from 18 to 12, and an overall reduction in the budget from £234,959 to £167,000. This reduction would have been as a result of the proposed removal of rurality funding from 12 existing LJs, and a slight redistribution of needs funding away from the main market towns to include three new LJs. These proposals have been consulted on and revised as a result of the feedback received.

#### 4.0 Summary of the feedback received through public consultation

##### 4.1

<b>335 responses received</b>	<b>YES number</b>	<b>NO number</b>	<b>YES %</b>	<b>NO %</b>
Q2 - do you agree with the proposal to reduce council funding in support of youth activity	10	325	2.99%	97.01%
Q3 - do you agree with the proposal to remove rurality considerations from the funding formula	15	320	4.48%	95.52%
Q4 - do you agree with the proposal to allocate funding to the larger market towns?	34	301	10.15%	89.85%
Q5 - do you agree with the proposal to remove grants to small voluntary clubs?	16	319	4.78%	95.22%

4.2 In addition to the responses made directly through the council’s consultation web portal, written feedback was received from a number of local councils and representatives of the youth clubs that would have been affected by the proposals. This feedback reflected the majority of that received, i.e. that funding in support of youth activities in rural areas should be retained.

## 5.0 Geographically targeted support

- 5.1 Geographically targeted support is delivered via a local commissioning approach. LJCs, local elected members, together with young people and supported by the Community Enablement Team, are responsible for making commissioning recommendations. LJCs 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 LJCs with this work and are responsible for procuring youth activity within the Councils' Constitution and Contract and Financial Rules.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 If additional funding from local councils to support their local activity can be agreed, the impact of these proposed savings on the current delivery can be mitigated.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the smaller settlements serving a rural hinterland retain funding at similar levels to their current amount. Reviews of the activity taking place in these areas is positive and there are examples of parish councils providing financial support.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the rurality grants are brought together into one centrally held pot, with a value of £33,000 that groups and clubs delivering activity in LJC areas currently eligible for rurality funding can bid into.
- 5.6 Communities within the LJCs that have previously received a rurality grant of £3,000 will be able to apply to a centrally held pot to a total maximum amount per LJC of £3,000 within 2018/19.
- 5.7 The rationale for changing to a centrally held grant pot is that it will reduce the administrative work for the individual Community Enablement Officers (CEOs) as this work will be done centrally, whilst ensuring that local members and LJC members continue to contribute to the application assessment process. The CEOs will still be able to provide the necessary support in bringing applications forward.
- 5.8 Applications will be asked to evidence how the funding will be used to achieve the council's recognised good outcomes for young people – ensuring the emotional wellbeing of children and young people by focussing on prevention and early intervention and keeping more children and young people healthy and reducing health inequalities.
- 5.9 In allocating funding and establishing the value of the total funding pot, the feedback received through the recent consultation has been considered and this is summarised below within a proposed **hierarchy of council support for youth club provision**.

Local Joint Committee Area (in descending order of needs score)	Current Rurality Funding	2018		
		Current needs funding £	Needs score	Proposed needs and rurality funding in 2018 £
<b>Tier 1 – Partner delivery commissioned by Shropshire Council</b>				
Shrewsbury	0	81,500	15.1%	25,000
Market Drayton	0	24,060	6.6%	14,500
Oswestry	0	24,640	6.0%	14,500
Bridgnorth, Worfield, Alveley and Claverley	1,500	10,120	5.6%	14,500 *
Whitchurch	0	15,580	4.5%	14,500
Ludlow and Clee area	0	10,850	5.0%	14,500
<b>Tier 2 - Community partnership youth provision supported by Shropshire Council</b>				
Wem and Shawbury	3,000	9,450	4.6%	8,000 *
Craven Arms and Rural	3,000		4.1%	4,000 *
Bishop's Castle, Chirbury, Worthen and Clun	3,000		3.0%	4,000 *
Ellesmere	3,000		3.9%	4,000 *
Gobowen, Selattyn, St Martins and Weston Rhyn	0	12,120	3.9%	12,000
Longden, Ford, Rea Valley and Loton incl Pontesbury and Minsterley	3,000	13,630	3.8%	12,000 *
<b>Tier 3 – Community provision supported by the Shropshire Youth Association</b>				
Shifnal and Sherrifhales	0		3.4%	0
Five Perry Parishes	0		3.3%	0
Broseley and Rural	0		3.2%	0
Tern and Severn Valley	3,000		3.2%	*
St Oswald	3,000		3.1%	*
Albrighton	0		3.1%	0
Strettondale and Burnell	3,000		3.0%	*
Highley and Brown Clee	1,500		2.8%	*
Cleobury and Rural	3,000		2.5%	*
Much Wenlock and Shipton	3,000		2.4%	*
Bayston Hill	0		2.4%	0
Centrally held rurality grant pot				33,000
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>201,950</b>		<b>£ 174,500</b>

\* LJC area able to access rurality grant funding pot

- 5.10 The funding allocation for Gobowen, Selattyn, St Martins and Weston Rhyn LJC and Longden, Ford, Rea Valley and Loton LJC (incl Pontesbury and Minsterley) are higher as a result of their significantly higher population and numbers of young people aged 10 to 19 years.
- 5.11 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, notably in the Tier 2 and Tier 3 groupings. We recognise this as being crucial to the long-term sustainability of an active and dynamic voluntary community sector.

Within the Tier 1 and Tier 2 groupings Local Joint Committees will continue to advise on the details of commissioned provision based on their local knowledge of need. For the immediate future, it is likely that Tier 1 clubs, i.e. clubs within the main market towns and within the areas of greatest need, will continue to be directly commissioned by Shropshire Council. In the smaller Tier 2 market towns, the Council aims to develop and support existing youth club infrastructure within a sustainable partnership framework.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 The revised funding proposals will result in 18 LJCs continuing to receive a funding allocation in 2018/19 at broadly similar levels to the status quo. The exceptions are Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Market Drayton LJCs. Where the town council within these areas has previously indicated that they will consider financially supporting youth activity, this intention will now be discussed in response to the proposed reduction in funding allocations.
- 6.2 Should any specific local challenges arise, which will impact upon the current provision, we propose to consider what transitional support could be provided.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 We have suggested different levels of council support within a hierarchy of delivery. We acknowledge that the aim should be to support clubs to become sustainable within their local communities outside the need for direct council support.

**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

Local Commissioning of Youth Activities – proposals for consultation on changes to the funding of targeted geographical provision, Cabinet, 18 October 2017

**Cabinet Member:**

Cllr Nick Bardsley – Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

**Local Members:**

All Members

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Feedback on the public consultation on the proposals on changes to the funding of targeted geographical provision – end date 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018