

Youth Strategy Consultation 2019

Feedback Report

November 2019



1. Background and Methodology

In May/June 2019 Shropshire Council established a Youth Work Scrutiny Task and Finish Group following growing national and local concerns linked to rural crime and the impact on vulnerable children and young people. The Task and Finish Group has continued to meet with the aim of gathering evidence to inform how Shropshire Council should best allocate available resources to meet local needs. The group agreed the need for a consultation to inform decision making on the future allocation of Shropshire Council's commissioning budget for youth services.

September 2019 saw the start of the consultation. The formal consultation period ran from the 9th September 2019 to the 31st October 2019. During that time an engagement log was used to record all engagement and promotional activities. There were 24 electronic newsletters/invitations/messages issued to invite key stakeholder groups to participate in the consultation and 3 public news articles.

Within the promotional work undertaken some specific groups were targeted including local organisations working with children and young people, schools, town and parish councils and voluntary and community sector groups and organisations. Every effort was made to ensure the consultation was well promoted and accessible by a range of people from children to members of the public and local services. A consultation briefing sheet was issued offering a range of choices for responding to the consultation including in writing/by email, face to face or online.

The research undertaken included:

- A review of local research reports carried out to determine the needs and views of children and young people living in Shropshire. This included:
 - #iWill feedback, Political Speed Dating feedback, and Youth Café and Detached Work Evaluation from South Shropshire Youth Forum.
 - Oswestry Youth Engagement project feedback from The New Saints FC Foundation.
- Face to face discussions with children and young people (a separate report has been produced to record the research undertaken by Shropshire Council's Business Design Team). Attendance at 11 local meetings (including partnership meetings and meetings organised specifically to engage with key stakeholders).
- Written consultation responses from town and parish councils, local organisations and members of the public.
- Survey feedback.

Three surveys were carried out as part of the consultation:

- 1) A stakeholder survey for local organisations with an interest in youth service provision;
- 2) A survey for children and young people to obtain their views; and
- 3) A public survey to gather the views of parents, grandparents, carers and other individuals.

Although this report focuses mainly on the surveys and the written responses received, some key findings from the other research work have been incorporated, where possible and relevant, to add depth to the findings, and provide a more comprehensive summary of feedback.

The report summarises the feedback received under 5 key headings:

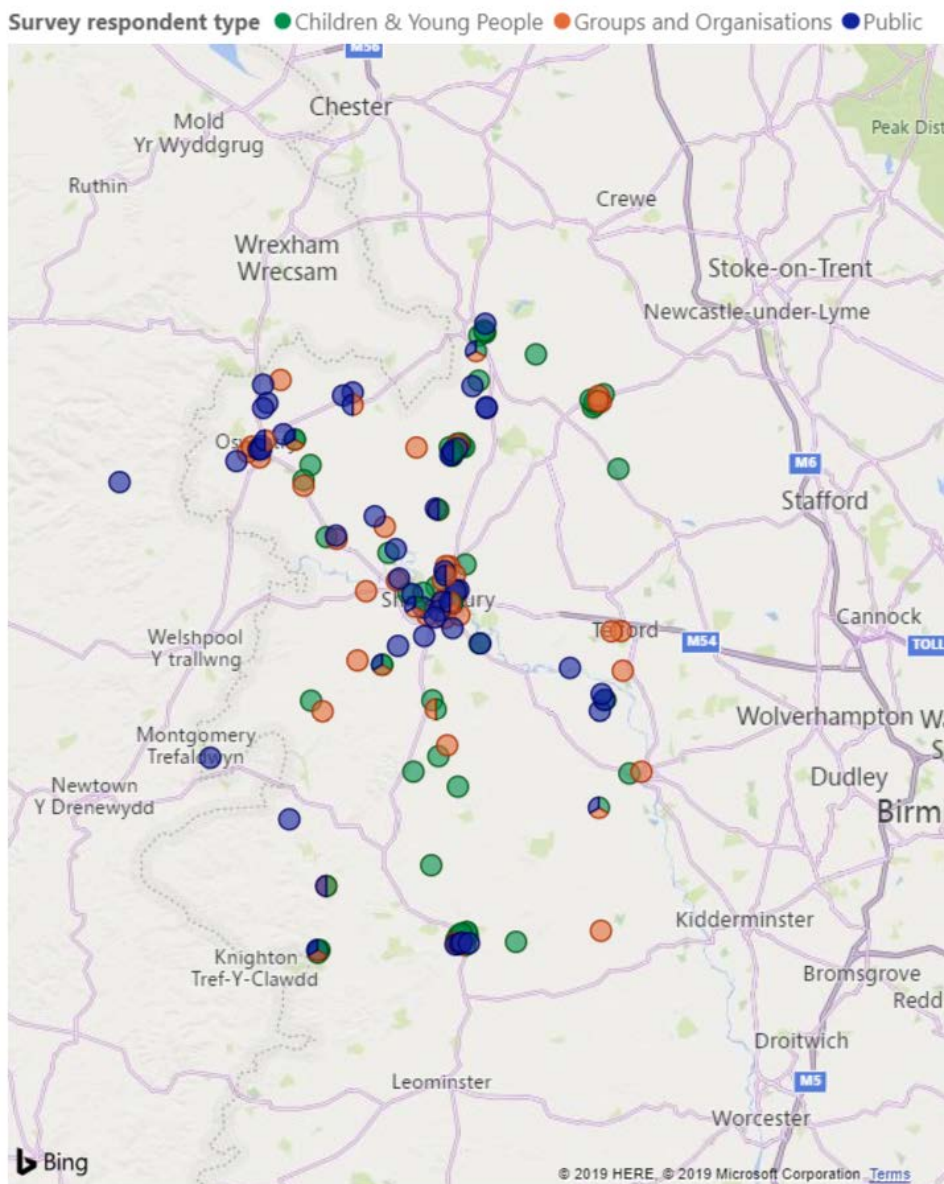
- Consultation Respondents
- Current Youth Provision

- Local Needs
- Future Support
- The Proposed Model

2. Consultation Respondents

In any consultation it is important to understand the characteristics of those who have responded. This understanding can allow any gaps to be filled and additional targeted engagement to take place. Shropshire Council works to ask key equality and diversity monitoring questions within its public consultations. This helps identify whether relevant groups within the community have been adequately included in the consultation and whether the respondents are representative of the wider community. One of the considerations includes where respondents are from. In a large rural county, it is important to ensure people from urban centres and rural communities to the north, south, east and west have been included. Map 1 below shows where the consultation respondents live/work.

Map 1 Home or work location of consultation respondents

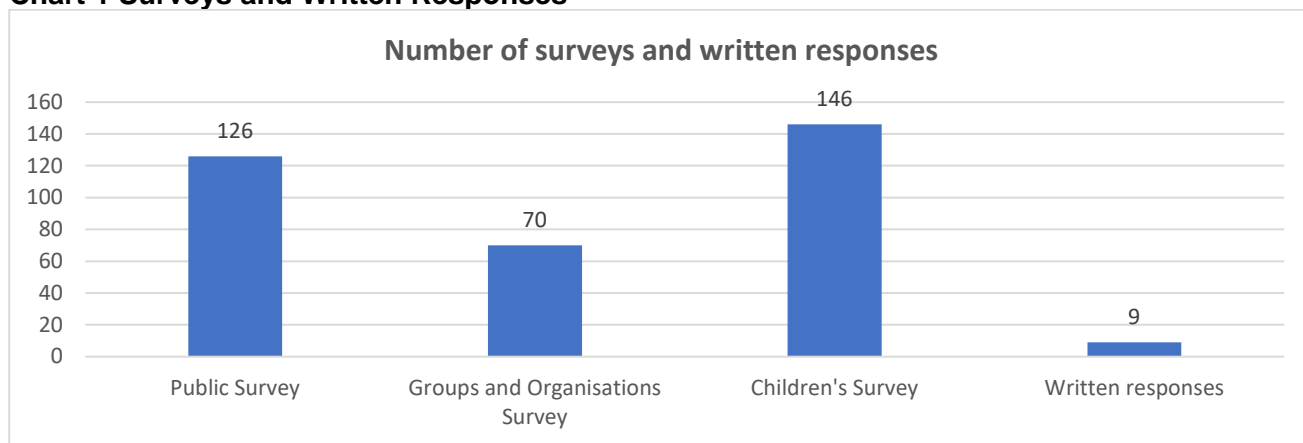


Map 1 presents postcode data (not all respondents provided postcodes, children and young people were much less likely to provide a postcode than other respondents).

Map 1 suggests the feedback received was from across the county. There were, perhaps, fewer public respondents from the central south, south west and north east areas. However, groups and organisations were well distributed (perhaps slightly under-represented in the south west of the county). Despite these slight differences and variations, overall the map suggests a good geographical spread when respondent types were combined.

Chart 1 below summarises the volume of feedback received. There were 342 surveys returned (some were completed online and others in paper format). In addition, there were 9 more formal and detailed written responses. There were 1,361 written comments from the 342 survey respondents.

Chart 1 Surveys and Written Responses



Other key information is summarised below by survey respondent type. It is worth noting that there appears to have been some cross over in the public and group/organisation surveys with some youth group leaders/volunteers choosing to complete the public survey rather than the group/organisation survey.

Children and Young People

Approximately 155 children and young people were engaged face to face (most of the face to face work is summarised as a separate report with key findings highlighted in this report) and 146 completed the consultation survey. Some children and young people responded to the online version of the survey, but the majority completed paper surveys in a group setting. When paper surveys were returned, the location/group name was provided. Table 1 displays the locations from which paper surveys were returned. It is not easy to see from Map 1 (because many children didn't provide postcodes), but there was a particularly good return from children and young people in the Bridgnorth area.

Table 1 Completed Paper Surveys by Location

Location	Number	%
Bridgnorth	46	35
Wem Juniors	24	18
Wem Seniors	4	3
Market Drayton	22	17
Pontesbury	2	2
Hinstock	2	2
Cross Houses	12	9
Broseley	1	1
Rushbury	6	5
Nesscliffe	4	3
Monkmoor	7	5
Total	130	100%

Face to face work took place in locations around Shropshire. Table 2 summarises the face to face engagement. Shropshire Council's Business Design Team engaged with 125 of the children interviewed and the remainder were spoken to in Shifnal by the lead within Children's Services.

The groups accessed for Face to Face engagement ranged from on the street work to sports clubs, youth clubs and Tuition, Medical and Behavioural Support Services centres.

Table 2 Face to Face Engagement by Location

Location	Number	%
Bridgnorth	20	13
Broseley	29	19
Nesscliffe	20	13
Westbury	21	14
Ludlow	19	12
Oswestry	6	4
Sundorne, Shrewsbury	5	3
Hook-a-Gate	5	3
Shifnal	30	19
Total	155	100%

Age was an important consideration in understanding consultation respondents. The survey feedback received suggests that many young people were aged 10 and 11. Many of the surveys were completed at youth groups and this suggests that the age group the consultation reached via youth clubs were predominantly children in the first few years of secondary school. The survey asked young people whether they were at college/university, school or employed. 2% were at college/university or employed and 90% at school. Chart 2 displays the survey respondents' ages.

Older young people were proved more difficult to reach via the survey but the face to face engagement carried out did involve a much larger proportion of young people aged 15 and 16 (in particular 24 of those who participated in workshops via the TMBSS centres were aged 15 and 16). Other older young people were spoken to in Ludlow at the youth café and on the streets. A few older children were also reached at Bridgnorth Seniors and Nesscliffe.

Chart 2 The age of children who responded to the survey

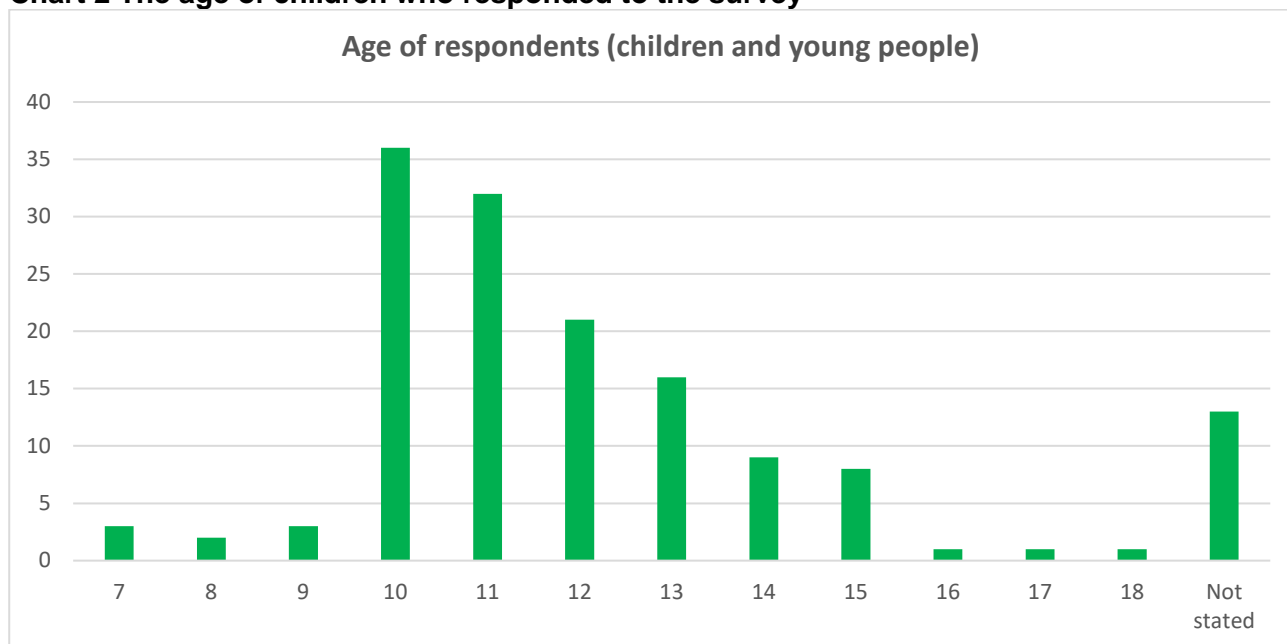
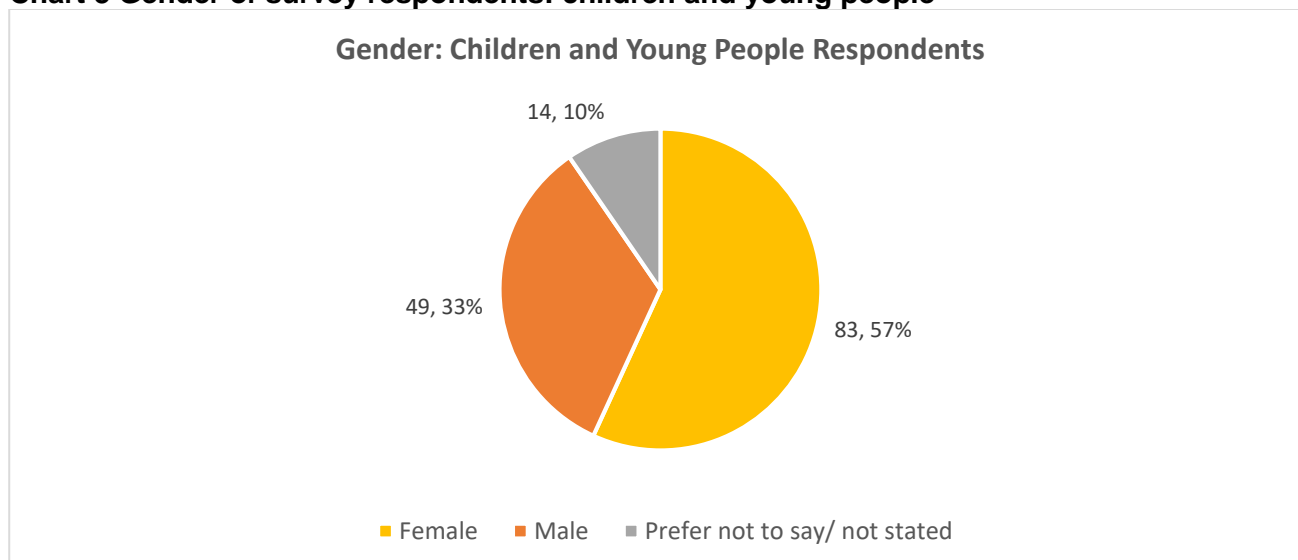


Chart 3 highlights that more girls than boys responded to the survey. 10% chose not to state their gender.

Chart 3 Gender of survey respondents: children and young people



Additional questions were included (within the survey but not face to face) to monitor equality and diversity characteristics. Only 2% of respondents who provided their ethnic group were not 'White (British, Irish, Polish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other White)'. This does, to a degree, reflect Shropshire's overall population. Similarly, only 4% of the respondents to the children and young people's survey do not speak English as their first language. 4% of the respondents have a long-standing disability that limits their daily activity. Shropshire Council places a strong emphasis on ensuring people of all characteristics can influence change as part of consultation processes. It should be noted that in order to ensure any future policy or service changes do not negatively impact on people of different characteristics and backgrounds, Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) are undertaken. An ESIA was completed by Children's Services leads prior to the consultation design and implementation.

Groups and Organisations

70 local groups and organisations responded to the consultation through the survey and 8 presented written responses (one member of the public also provided written feedback). One late organisational survey was converted into a written response because responses were detailed and arrived after the survey analysis had been completed; this ensured everything has been included). Chart 4 suggest a good spread of responses have been received across organisational types.

Chart 4 Consultation respondent groups and organisations by type

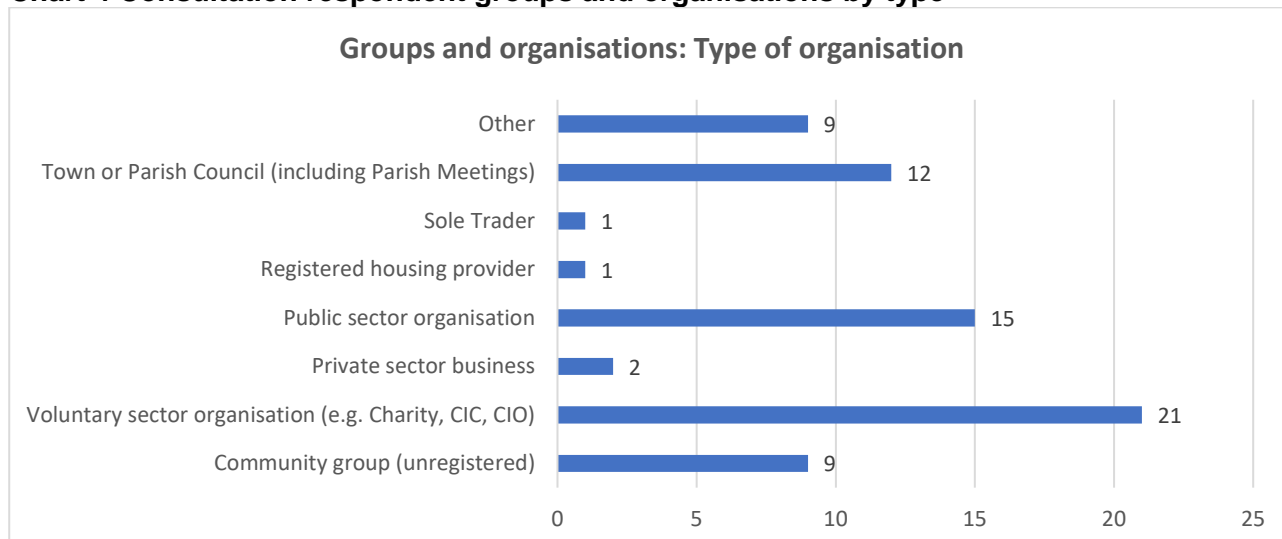


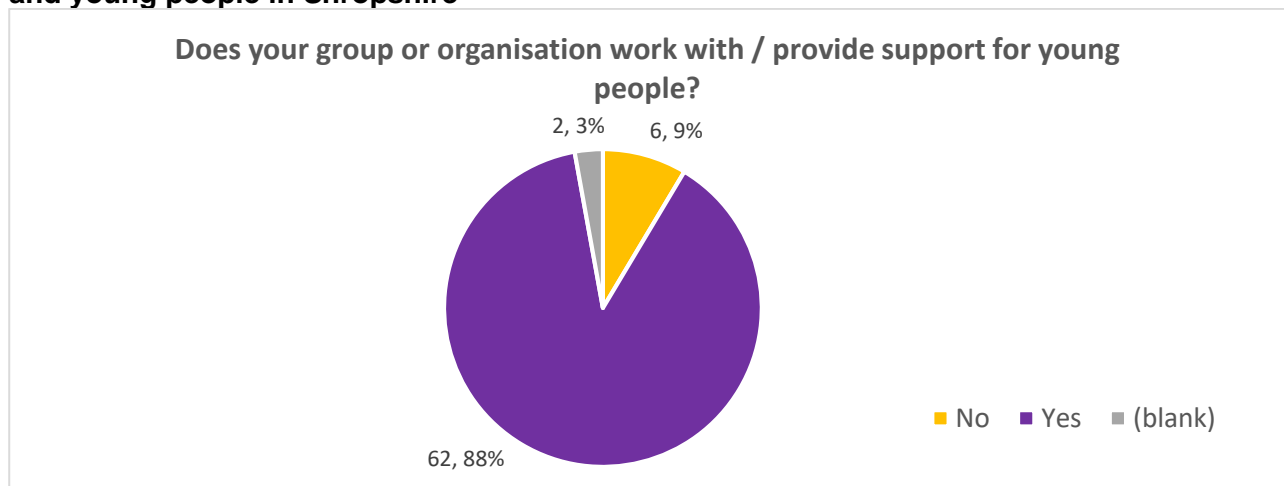
Chart 4 highlights that 9 ‘other’ types of organisations responded to the consultation. A closer look shows that 3 were schools/colleges, 2 were church based groups, 3 were public sector organisations and one was a political party. Combined with the analysis of organisation and group respondents which highlighted a good spread across different geographical locations within Shropshire, there is evidence to suggest the response from organisations and groups was comprehensive and varied. The survey asked groups and organisations which geographical area they provide services within and Chart 5 displays the results. 28 of the 70 groups and organisations work across Shropshire or both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, 25 work either in the northern, central or southern areas of the county and 14 work in specific communities.

Chart 5 Areas covered by group and organisation survey respondents



Through the survey, the groups and organisations were asked about the work they do with children and young people in Shropshire. Chart 6 highlights that 6 of the 70 groups and organisations don't work directly to support children and young people but have an interest in youth services provision.

Chart 6 Group and organisation survey respondents by whether they work with children and young people in Shropshire



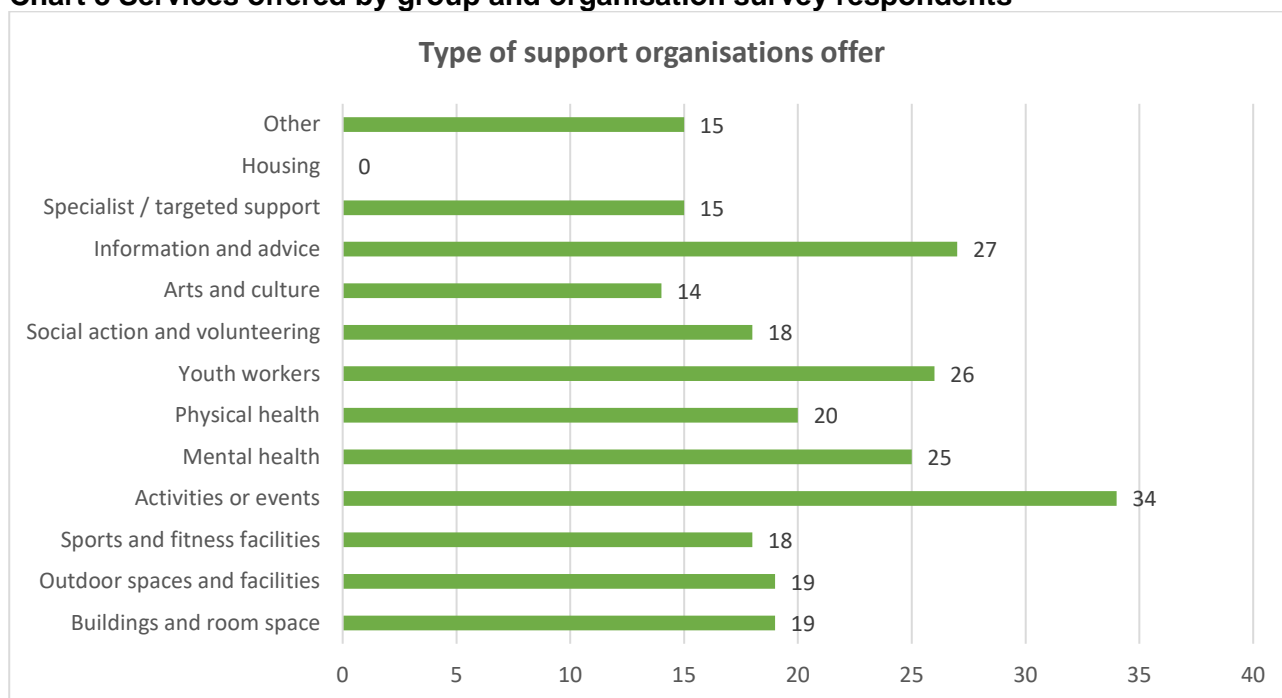
The groups and organisations working with children and young people were asked which age groups they support. Chart 7 displays the feedback received. Most of the groups and organisations work with 2 or more of the age groups with the majority focusing on 10 to 17 year olds.

Chart 7 Group and organisation survey respondents by age groups supported



In order to better understand the nature of the survey respondent groups and organisations, they were asked which type of services they offer. Chart 8 highlights that the 70 groups and organisations provide support across many service themes (with the exception of housing). This is worth noting and could be addressed through additional engagement if needed, although this does not generate concerns at the current stage of work. Approximately half of the group and organisations provide youth activities/events and many mentioned they are youth clubs within the open text responses. There were 15 other services delivered not listed within the list provided and they included education, careers advice, family support, training and sports/physical activity.

Chart 8 Services offered by group and organisation survey respondents



Questions were included within the survey to understand the nature of the groups and organisations responding to the consultation, but also to understand a little more about their future ambitions and current use of youth infrastructure support services. Chart 9 highlights that 28 (54%) of the 70 respondents have ambitions to further develop the youth provision offered by their group or organisation.

Chart 9 Survey respondent groups and organisations by whether they have ambition to further develop youth provision in the future.

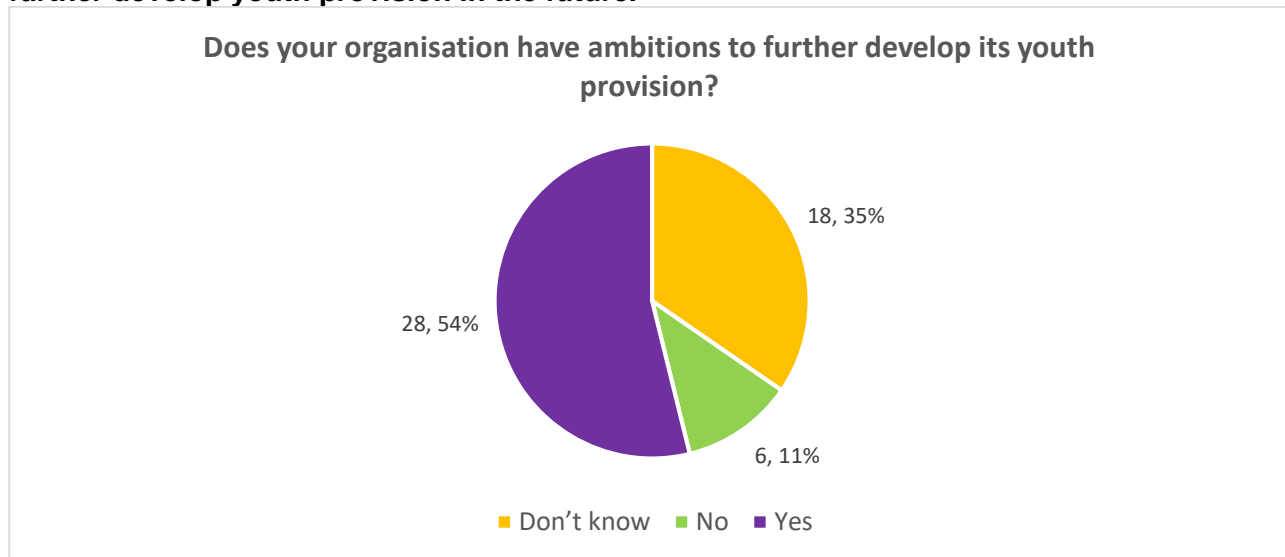
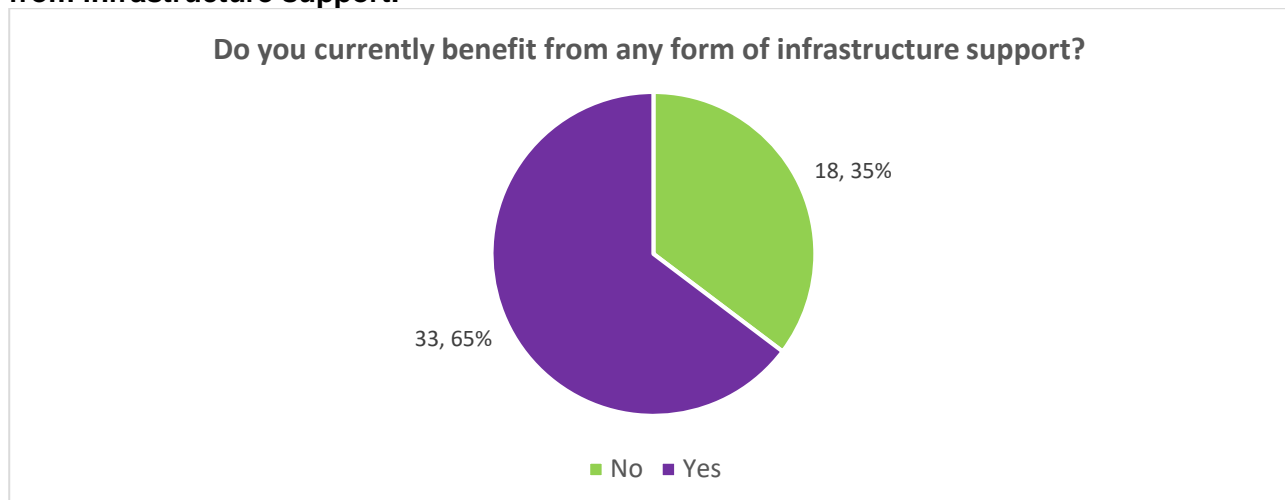


Chart 10 Survey respondent groups and organisations by whether they currently benefit from infrastructure support.



The theme of youth infrastructure support was an important one within the consultation because it currently forms a significant focus of Shropshire Council's commissioned services for youth. Of the 70 groups and organisations, 33 receive infrastructure support services, 18 don't and 19 didn't answer the question. Chart 11 looks more closely at the type of support the 33 organisations benefit from. The 33 organisations access a wide range of different infrastructure support types, DBS checks are the top category followed by training, resources for youth leaders and legal advice/insurance/liabilities.

Table 3 provides a summary of the 31 written comments received when groups and organisations were asked 'Which organisations do you receive support from?' Some organisations mentioned multiple sources of support so 44 themes were recorded from the 31 comments. Shropshire Youth Association is the main provider of infrastructure support within the results: 16 (36%) of the organisations mentioned Shropshire Youth Association within their response. 7 organisations mentioned Shropshire Council or one of its departments, 6 listed a mix of independent non-public sector organisations and 6 mentioned support from public sector organisations other than Shropshire Council (the NHS was mentioned twice).

Chart 11 Infrastructure support received by consultation respondents (groups and organisations)

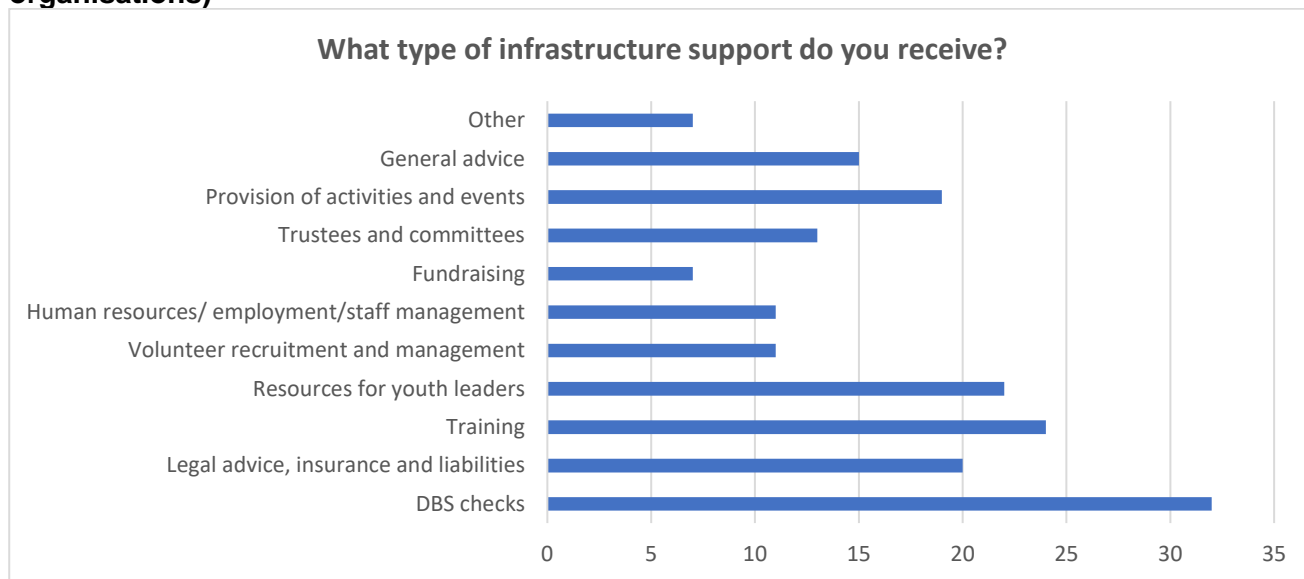


Table 3 Bodies from which groups and organisations access infrastructure support

Theme from comments	Number	%
Shropshire Youth Association	16	36
Shropshire Council	7	16
Another National Association/Umbrella Body	4	9
Energize	2	5
National Youth Association	2	5
Other - Public Sector (including NHS)	6	14
Other - Non-public sector	6	14
Town or parish council	1	2
Total	44	100%

A few of the comments about infrastructure support have been included below. They are really useful and provide a better insight into the issue than the summarised findings above.

Example comments: Infrastructure Support

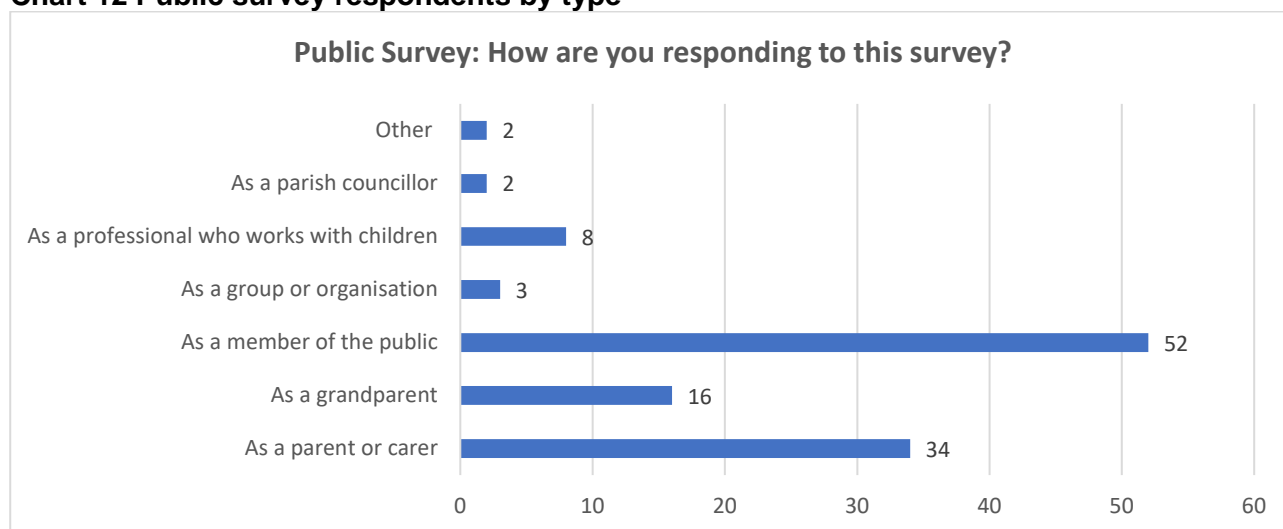
- *Shropshire Youth Association (SYA) provide a vital service for us. We would not exist without them. Most of our volunteers are parents working full-time. SYA guide us on all the legislation and standards we need to meet.*
- *Shropshire Youth Association, Energize, Young Shrewsbury, Sported, Street Games, Local Joint Committees.*
- *Shropshire Youth Association runs Ludlow Youth Club. Craven Arms Girls Group receives valuable support from Shropshire Youth Association. The Police in both towns support the work, calling in on occasions or sit in at meetings in Craven Arms.*
- *Local Authority and community building providers.*
- *Trussell Trust, local churches, Churches Together.*
- *NSPCC, National Youth Forum, Big Lottery. Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts - Our Bright Futures.*

The questions asked of the groups and organisations provided a much better understanding of the survey consultation respondents.

Members of the Public

The public consultation survey included standard questions used by Shropshire Council to both monitor equality and diversity characteristics and better understand the results of engagement activity. These questions were voluntary and many survey respondents (approximately 50 of the 126) chose not to respond. The first main characteristics question within the public survey was designed to see how many members of the public had participated in the consultation. Chart 12 displays the results.

Chart 12 Public survey respondents by type



50 of the 126 people who responded to the survey were parents, carers or grandparents and 52 described themselves as members of the public. 3 groups or organisations chose to use the public survey rather than complete the survey for groups and organisations.

40% of the survey respondents were female, 17% were male and 43% either preferred not to say or chose not to answer the question. It is a slight concern that men were underrepresented in the public survey but with many choosing not to provide gender it is hard to draw a firm conclusion. The age group mix of the public survey was varied with the exception that young adults (probably those without children) were not well represented (see chart 13). In a similar way to the survey for children and young people, it is not certain whether the responses represent the diversity of communities within Shropshire. Only those with the ethnicity 'White (British, Irish, Polish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other White)' provided their ethnicity but there could have been some diversity within the 50 respondents who chose not to complete the characteristics section of the survey. It is something to bear in mind when considering the feedback and next stages of work, to ensure no bias is applied within service design.

Chart 13 Age group of public survey respondents

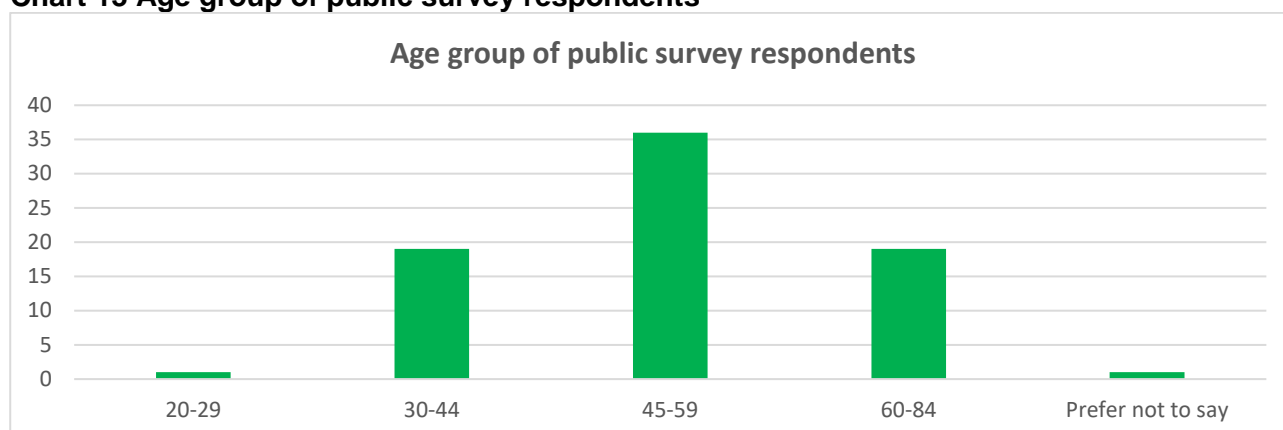


Chart 14 displays the employment status of survey respondents. It reflects the age groups shown in Chart 13, most survey respondents are employed or self-employed (44%) and 9% retired.

Chart 14 Employment status of public survey respondents

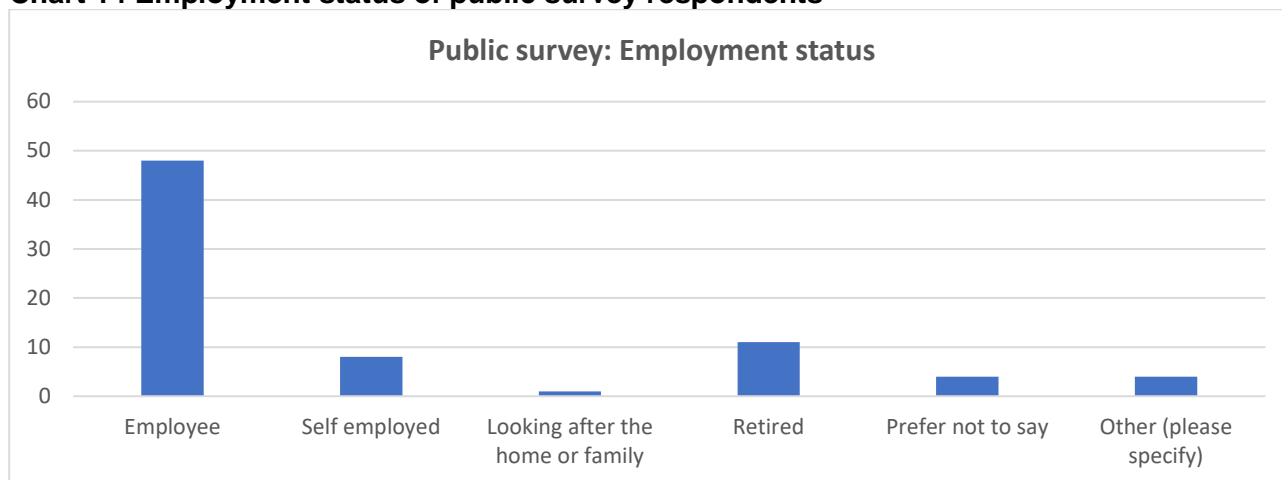


Table 4 help to highlights that there was a good spread of survey respondents representing different communities across the county. Map 1 displays the locations of survey respondents' homes and Table 4 the towns they associate with for accessing services.

Table 4 Nearest towns described by public survey respondents

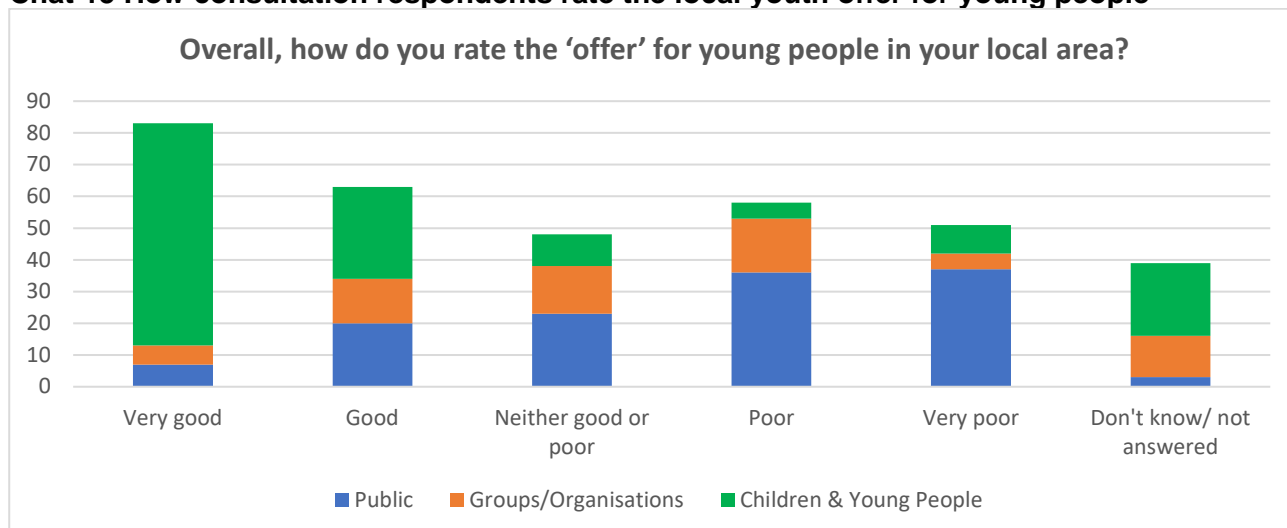
Town	Number	Town	Number
Bishops Castle	2	Oswestry and Shrewsbury	2
Bridgnorth	1	Shrewsbury	30
Bridgnorth & Telford	1	St Martins	1
Broseley	3	Telford	1
Chester	1	Welshpool	1
Ellesmere	2	Wem	3
Gobowen and Oswestry	1	Wem and Whitchurch	1
Knighton	1	Whitchurch	3
Leominster	1	Wrexham	1
Ludlow	8	Did not state	55
Oswestry	7	Total	126

3. Current Youth Provision

Based on an understanding of consultation respondents, the research undertaken considered how youth services and provision are currently perceived in Shropshire. All three survey groups were asked 'Overall, how do you rate the 'offer' for young people in your local area?' Chart 15 displays the response. Overall more people consider the current offer to be very good or good (43%) compared to poor or very poor (32%), the remainder had no opinion, did not know, or didn't answer. However, it is interesting to compare the responses between the different groups. Members of the public and groups and organisations were less likely to consider the current offer to be very good or good compared to children and young people. Indeed, more members of the public and groups and organisations selected poor/very poor (48%) than very good/good (24%).

Some additional questions were asked within the surveys to explore this further. Slightly different questions were used for each group.

Chat 15 How consultation respondents rate the local youth offer for young people



Concerns

Members of the public were asked to explain why if they had rated the current youth offer as poor or very poor. 61 written comments were provided, some included more than one main point or theme. Table 5 summarises the feedback.

Table 5 Comment themes – If you said poor or very poor (rating the current youth offer) please explain why? (Public survey)

Theme	Number	%
Little or no provision	31	37
Cuts/ loss of youth services	19	23
Lack of qualified youth workers	11	13
Low participation/not reaching/lack voice	7	8
Impact of reductions (e.g. crime, mental health, SEND)	7	8
No venues/places to come together	5	6
Quality of provision	2	2
Inconsistency of provision	2	2
Total	84	100%

The main concerns within comments was the low volume of provision and impact of public sector funding reductions/austerity on the youth service in Shropshire. Example comments shown below help to provide a better picture of the feedback. Some comments were very long and detailed and as a result only some extracts have been included.

Example comments: Public concerns

- *Universal provision for young people has been decimated. There is nowhere for young people to go; nothing for young people to do; and no one for young people to talk to.*
- *There is a very poorly supported youth club locally which requires more volunteers. They receive great help in regards to infrastructure from SYA but struggle to attract and retain volunteers. This is the only youth provision in walking distance of our village. There are two play areas, one often covered in broken glass, and the other is locked off to protect the grounds. There is no range or diversity in the offer, such as after school activities or clubs in the village. The range of options are severely limited for children under the age of 16.*

- *Closure of youth service facilities and the removal of youth workers has seen a dramatic increase in youth issues in most of the towns in Shropshire; one has to wonder if the increase with and in drug issues is a result of this.*
- *There currently appears to be no holistic approach across the local authority as to what makes a sufficient and indeed high-quality provision of youth support services to meet the needs of all its children and young people so that they all have opportunities to reach their full potential. It is already recognised by government that the austerity cut backs have had a detrimental impact on our young people..... The LAs own statistics show that there are ever increasing number of children and young people, living with an autistic spectrum disorder, conduct disorder or emotional, social and behavioural difficulties that not only make them vulnerable but can all too often seriously impact on their sense of belonging..... The detached provision is particularly important as young people who are already very vulnerable are far too often and too frequently being either temporarily or permanently excluded*
- *In the Oswestry Area we have the Oak Centre that was built on the site of the former centre North West Youth Centre. Now it largely lies empty especially at the weekends this is a disgrace, this building has a music studio, hall, craft workshop-open it and use it not just for disaffected youth but for everyone as a community hub. There is a significant lack of trust between young people and the older generation. We need to come together to help each other....*
- *Although I have no children of school age, it appears that services such as open access youth clubs/groups have seen significant reductions in local (SC) funding over the past few years and there appears to be a greater reliance on individuals volunteering to work with our YP - such as brownies, scouts etc. There also appears to be a greater expectation by commissioners that existing voluntary groups will bid for other (central) government funding, and charitable grants and bursaries. This means that the volunteers (who do a fantastic job) either have to focus on clawing funding in OR deliver services - the model doesn't work.*

The 9 written responses (most of them from local councils and organisations) highlighted some concerns but their main focus was responding to the proposals made and therefore more information is provided later in this report (see 'Future' heading). Some extracts are provided below as examples, but full responses have been read and considered by the lead officers:

Example comments: Extracts from written consultation responses

- *Local provision relies on member organisations such as the scouts and guides, football clubs or church youth clubs so it is not universal or fully open to non-members who may not be able to afford subscriptions or may have other faiths.*
- *In general, youth have been – and continue to be – depicted as problems to be solved.....At its core, youth work is about supporting young people's agency, empowerment, and their role as change agents. As such, it cannot be effectively implemented without involving young people in decision-making processes that affect them.*
- *Under the management of the Community Enablement Team, our Youth & Community Development Officer had termly meetings to discuss the outputs of our service in terms of number of sessions and number of young people engaged with but also the outcomes focussing of live examples of how the service had benefitted key individuals. Since the Community Enablement Team was disbanded that regular engagement has not been as rich.*

Children and young people were asked why they rated the current offer of youth provision poor or very poor (if they hadn't selected another option). There were only 14 responses, but they were interesting to read. 6 comments were about the lack of anything else to do with the exception of the local youth club. 3 comments asked for more youth club sessions or longer sessions and 3 complained that there wasn't an offer for young people at all within the community they live in. Other these included a lack of things to do.

Example comments: Concerns from Children and Young People

- *Want more time at youth club and more nights.*

- *All we have is youth club and nothing else much.*
- *We've got nowhere to go. In the summer we can meet and go to the park but nowhere to meet in evening or weekend. No trips or places to go out of Ludlow and villages.*
- *No one is there to help me now I am nearly 19. I liked being at school, no one is interested in my future or how to help me now, not even college.*

Key messages from the feedback overall were that people consider that the investment in young services is not enough, that losses over time have led to an over-reliance on voluntary work and that the 'offer' for young people in Shropshire is limited and inconsistent.

Gaps/ Things that could be improved

Each of the three main stakeholder groups engaged with through the surveys were asked, in some way, about gaps in current provision. The public survey and survey for groups and organisations both asked 'Are there any gaps or areas in need of improvement?'. 71 members of the public provided written comments, as did 35 groups or organisations. Many people mentioned more than one theme within their comment. Tables 6 and 7 summarise the results and example comments are also provided.

Table 6 Comment themes – Public survey: 'Are there any gaps or areas in need of improvement?'

Theme	Number	%
Universal provision/more provision	18	21
Rural area support	13	15
Provision for older young people	12	14
General lack of support/funding/resources	8	9
More qualified youth workers	6	7
Targeted work to address behaviour/crime	6	7
Outreach/ work at street level	5	6
Support with mental health, other health and life skills	4	5
Investment in venues and equipment	4	5
Other gaps	9	11
Total	85	100%

Example comments: Gaps (Public Survey)

- *There needs to be more places for children to use, which are safe, affordable and staffed by decent workers.*
- *There is a need for outreach provision to get a service to smaller villages and towns without any provision.*
- *Youth work provision, as so many services all too often, run only Mon-Fri. Often during the early evening, when some of our young people are most vulnerable between school and early evening, later in the evening for older teenagers, and of course during weekends, where they may be too few responsible adults within the extended family network to supervise any free time, either through activities or "just hanging out".*
- *Children and young people with poor school attendance or displaying behaviour which leads to exclusion far too often end up missing those key learning opportunities that schools offer relating to the community e.g. "stranger danger", "knife crime", "money laundering" etc.*
- *Detached work needs to be more prominent than at present; possibly start with the older teenagers who are vulnerable because they believe they have insufficient money for their needs and expectations from the life they have. Some of the current societal issues can have an impact on children and young people across the social classes. How are we dealing with this? Do we liaise with the private schools? Do they have skills or access to funding sources that could help increase funding within the county for youth services?.....*

- *We need to think outside the box. Bring everyone with an interest in improving our community for everyone not isolated development 'for Youth' or 'For The Elderly' or the 'Unemployed'. Rather we need a radical whole community approach for everyone!*

Table 7 Comment themes – Groups and organisations: ‘Are there any gaps or areas in need of improvement?’

Theme	Number	%
Need for more qualified youth workers	14	28
Lack of funding/investment in buildings and equipment	12	24
Universal provision and not enough capacity	10	20
Support for older young people	1	2
Specialist advice/training for workers	4	8
Targeted support for particular groups/needs	2	4
Other comment	7	14
Total	50	100%

Example comments: Gaps (Groups and Organisations’ Survey)

- *We need help with volunteer recruitment as have tried and failed to get enough volunteers locally.*
- *Sustainable, manageable facilities and meeting spaces. More opportunities to share - it feels fairly combative, whereas I am of the mindset the entire youth provision should be considered holistically and there be something for every young person, other sectors see it as a competition for numbers, they need everyone, regardless of the young person's needs, but there isn't the forum to share the more holistic view. We also don't know how to support one-another.*
- *There needs to be security of funding for core costs such as staffing, training and venue costs. This would enable better long-term planning. Funding levels need to be higher to reflect the increased activity of the Club and the increasing need as other youth services are cut (CAMHS, school pastoral/arts provision, local sports facilities) and austerity limits family provision. This would enable our volunteer committee to focus on providing quality activities rather than constant fund raising. We are concerned that we have a waiting list for our 7-12 year olds and cannot recruit anew this year as we are full. We would like to open another night to meet this need but cannot afford staffing. We are also concerned that our young people are not accessing quality healthy food as local provision is limited and expensive, lack of affordable transport/public transport coupled with low income/problems with Universal Credit are producing pockets of food poverty. We are also concerned that emotional wellbeing/mental health provision seems lacking or inaccessible. We would like to see regular, trusted, expert provision in the YC venue to meet needs we are not equipped to.....*
- *I miss the staff at Walker House where I felt confident they could help with any problem immediately, whether paedophile grooming, youth camp management, advice on family relationships with teenagers. I was always welcome to drop in.*
- *All areas need Youth workers/youth clubs, and those that are already open need to be able to open more often and for a wider age range. Alternative Curriculum for some young people more suited to school life needs to be funded and run by Youth workers who work in a much more relaxed style; and aim the world according to the young people's abilities and interests. Youth workers are specifically trained to build up caring positive relationships with the young people they work with. This would help to prevent so many young people from being excluded from school.*

The common frustrations voiced by the public survey respondents and groups and organisations appear to be a lack of resources to provide services to meet the needs of all local children and young people. Children and young people were asked about gaps in a slightly different way. Rather than being asked a very general question, they were asked ‘Is there anything you don’t like about your youth club, or things that should be improved?’.

Table 8 Comment themes – Children and Young People: ‘Is there anything you don’t like about your youth club, or things that should be improved?’

Theme	Number	%
Nothing I don't like	70	59
More sports, activities, trips, things to do	11	9
Noise and behaviour of others	6	5
Investment in equipment or buildings	6	5
More frequent sessions/ longer sessions	6	5
Internet games/ more IT access	6	5
Issues with adults/less 'bossy'	4	3
Would like older young people to be able to attend	3	3
Free access	2	2
Other	4	3
Total	118	100%

From reading all the comments made by the children and young people, most were under the impression that their youth club would be threatened with closure as a result of the consultation. This inevitably influenced the responses. 59% responded that there isn't anything they don't like about their youth club. The other responses are summarised in Table 8 and examples are given below.

Example comments – Children and Young People: Things that could be improved.

- *Please don't close this, I love it.*
- *Nothing it's awesome.*
- *No, it is perfect.*
- *More often and longer sessions.*
- *It isn't on enough - every two weeks - would be better weekly.*
- *Maybe some other activities suited for the older ones not just the younger ones.*
- *It can be too noisy sometimes caused by youth club members who scream.*
- *The toilets they are a bit grimy. The games on the internet they are over our age limit.*

The face to face engagement feedback report also looks at gaps and areas for improvement. The full report should be considered for all the details, but key findings included:

- Some young people said bullies prevented them from attending their youth club.
- Some young people, particularly those engaged with at TMBSS centres said they found the youth club environment difficult because it was noisy or didn't meet their needs.
- Older young people commented that the youth clubs were not aimed at their age group and they felt “too old” to attend.
- Some young people spoke about a sense that services and activities had either already been lost or were being lost.
- A theme within the discussions was reducing levels of safety and parents becoming less likely to let their children out without supervision.
- Some young people felt older members of the community view them negatively.

Things that work well

Understanding what works well is as important as identifying concerns, areas for improvement and gaps. Members of the public and groups and organisations were asked ‘What is working well within the provision of youth services and support?’. There were 72 written comments from members of the public and 39 from groups and organisations. These comments were then themed and the results displayed in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9 Comment themes – Public Survey: ‘What is working well within the provision of youth services and support?’

Theme	Number	%
Volunteers and work of voluntary & community sector	20	24
Where support exists, it is good	19	23
Where there are experienced/qualified workers	7	9
Support from Shropshire Youth Association	7	9
Work of town and parish councils	4	5
Health and drug prevention work with young people	4	5
Support for particular targeted/special needs	4	5
Neutral comments or concerns	17	21
Total	82	100%

Example comments: Public survey: What is working well

- *There are some excellent youth workers in Shropshire.*
- *The Youth Club in Bucknell is brilliant, so varied and engaging. Our daughter loves it and so much effort is put into everything.*
- *We have a local youth group that started Jan 2019 and is going from strength to strength.*
- *Young people at an influential age are being supported and occupied by trained & experienced youth workers. They have a safe environment in which to meet friends and are given a wide variety of activities to take part in.*
- *What little there is, is good.*
- *Despite the austerity measures that have, alongside the increased budgetary demands made on Children's Services as more children and young people are identified either as being in need or looked after, town, parish councils and voluntary sector groups have worked really hard to keep some essential youth services running in key areas or for specialised groups. This skeleton provision has somehow managed to continue to support some of our most vulnerable young people with the limited short-term money that has been available.*
- *Shrewsbury Town Council current youth provision, however this needs to be extended to make a real impact. Universal Provision is limited.*
- *SYA groups provide beneficial opportunities for support and engaging activities for some young people, it is unclear whether the most vulnerable young people access these groups.*

Table 10 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations Survey: ‘What is working well within the provision of youth services and support?’

Theme	Number	%
Examples of local support working well	28	50
Not good really - neutral comments or concerns	7	13
Support for targeted/special needs	7	13
Work of town and parish councils	5	9
Volunteers and work of voluntary & community sector	3	5
Support from Shropshire Youth Association	3	5
Health, school nursing, drug prevention work	2	4
Partnerships/networks	1	2
Total	56	100%

Example comments: Groups and organisations survey: What is working well

- *Individual youth work projects are doing good work in some areas of the County e.g. Shrewsbury Town Council, Shropshire Youth Association (locality youth clubs), Shrewsbury Football Hub, Hive Art Centre, Beam Mental Health drop-in.*

- The Town Council provides and maintains the Craven arms Playing Fields which has a Children Play Area, BMX Track, Skate Park, MUGA, Outdoor Gym Facilities, Football Pitch, Rounders Area etc. The field is well used by the local Children and Youth. The Town Council also provides financial support to the Craven Arms Community Centre where there are indoor sports facilities and is used by the Youth Club.
- The current provision of a youth club in Westbury is assisting with young people in the village. A village with above average rate of ASB and crime.
- We provide a place where young people (11 to 16) can meet their friends every week during term-time. There is the only service of its type in our village. It provides an opportunity for social interaction and community for young people who after leaving the village primary school, attend at least four different secondary schools. We provide a stimulating calendar of activities including science, environment, sport, art to open young people's minds to the possibilities available to them. This is balanced with social time to play pool, table tennis etc. We involve generations across the village to encourage cross generational respect and sense of community.....
- The infrastructure support contract to SYA enables us to offer the 120+ voluntary clubs we support a good level of training, advice, activities, support visits, and governance support. According to NYA figures about 75% of the sector does not have trained youth workers or safeguarding training. As a result of SC contract. Shropshire's Voluntary Sector is well trained, DBS checked and safeguarding trained. The small amount of youth activity that is commissioned is of reasonable quality, but not resourced to be good Youth Work and it is too little.
- We have youth workers working in public health services in the NHS. They work well with one to one support for young people as referred by the schools.

Children and young people were asked a less general question to determine what they like best about current youth provision. The survey asked 'What do you like best about your youth club?' and 130 children and young people provided written comments. Table 11 summarises the responses. Many provided more than one theme within their answer. Meeting friends, participating in activities/events and having fun were the most common responses. 17 respondents (9%) mentioned the support from youth workers/adults.

Table 11 Comment themes – Children and Young People: What they like about their youth club

Theme	Number	%
Meeting friends	63	32
Events and activities	41	21
I/We have fun	37	19
Workers/Support	17	9
Food	12	6
Sports	10	5
Trips out	5	3
Other	12	6
Total	197	100%

Example comments: What young people like about youth clubs

- Meeting friends and being able to have fun and play around. Also the trips and opportunities.
- Seeing my friends out of school. Can speak to the adults if I have worries. I have learnt to do lots of new things. I volunteer here - this is my 3rd year helping.
- Spending time with friend, good stuff, new skills, getting out the house and do fun stuff, good price.
- New experiences, Fun activities, Entertainment, trips, projects, cooking, making things, art.
- I like that the staff are awesome and loads of my friends are there.

- *The fact that everyone takes part and the adults there are all supportive and funny, always willing to talk.*

The face to face engagement obtained similar feedback. The group at Shifnal Boxing Club explained they value their club for the following reasons: to keep fit, to make friends, to keep out of trouble, to get support from other people, they had fun, felt supported by the club leaders, felt like they had achieved something, to manage their anger issues, and to learn how to protect themselves. The responses from the youth clubs visited included positive comments about youth clubs such as friendship, having fun, being able to express themselves, having someone to talk to, somewhere they are not being judged, and being given food.

It is interesting to note that food was mentioned quite a few times in the feedback, accompanied by feedback from a youth worker who highlighted that they had concerns that a proportion of the children they support would not be fed and go hungry unless they ate at the youth club. This links well into the next main theme of the research and consultation: exploring local needs.

Use of youth services – children and young people

A section of the survey for children and young people asked how they were currently using youth services. Information was collected for the following questions:

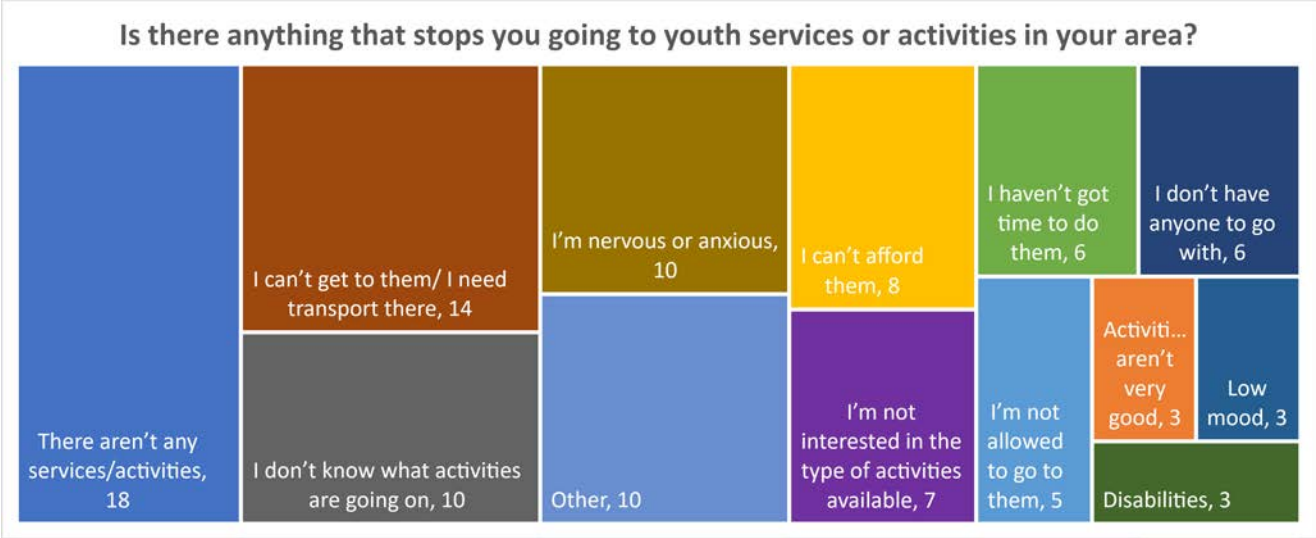
- What do you most enjoy doing in your spare time?
- Which of the following do you make use of in your local area?
- Is there a youth club in your area?
- How often do you go to a youth club, how often do you attend?
- If you go to a youth club, why?
- Is there anything that stops you going to youth services or activities in your area?
- Where do you currently get support from if you need it?

The results were skewed by the fact that the majority of surveys for children and young people were completed as paper surveys within youth clubs. Despite this, the results show that spending time with friends, spending time outdoors and watching TV are the top 3 activities children enjoy. The leisure facilities children and young people use most are parks, after school clubs, leisure centres and other sports facilities. Only 6 young people said there wasn't a youth club in their area (these were within the small number of online survey responses collected). 82% of the youth clubs used by the survey respondents are weekly. The reasons young people go to youth club (this linked to the open comments question focused on what children most like about their youth club) and barriers to attending youth club are shown as tree maps below. When children and young people want support, they are most likely to ask family/relatives, followed by friends but 48 of the respondents would ask a youth worker and 52 would ask for support at school/college.

Tree Map 1 If you go to a youth club, why?



Tree Map 2 Is there anything that stops you going to youth services or activities in your area?

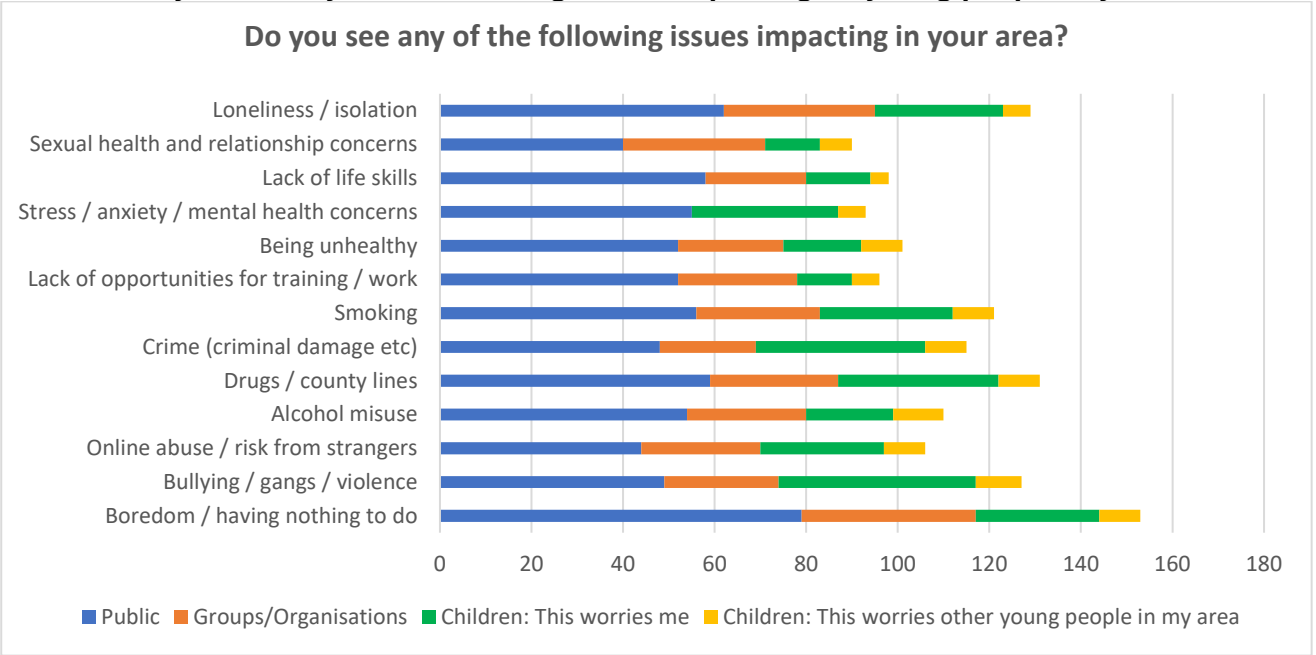


Tree Map 2 highlights that the greatest barriers to attending youth clubs (bearing in mind the vast majority of survey respondents attend youth clubs and completed their surveys there) are considered to be too few activities/services, travel/transport, being nervous/anxious of going somewhere new and not knowing what is available.

4. Local Needs

The consultation also aimed to better understand local needs by obtaining feedback. All of the surveys included the question 'Do you see any of the following issues impacting on young people in your area?' Chart 16 displays the response. Children and young people were asked to differentiate between whether the issue worries them individually, and/or whether it was an issue for other young people in their area. For example, it was anticipated that although some young people may not worry about alcohol and drugs if they do not use them, they may see others in the community experiencing that issue. The feedback highlights little difference with large numbers of all groups expressing concerns about all issues. Boredom, rural isolation and loneliness were the top issues followed by drugs/county lines, bullying and smoking.

Chart 16 Do you see any of the following issues impacting on young people in your area?



Although large numbers of people express concerns about the issues listed, it is possible that available data and other sources of information would help put some of these concerns into context. In order to understand local needs better, each group were asked to describe local needs in more detail. Members of the public and groups and organisations were asked 'Please describe any other problems or concerns for young people in your area'. There were 51 comments from members of the public about needs and 25 from groups and organisations. Table 12 shows that boredom and rural isolation were mentioned most frequently followed by a fear of the impact of crime and substance misuse and increasing poverty/lack of opportunity for children and young people. Example comments are used to illustrate the feedback received.

Table 12 Comment themes – Public Survey: Needs of Children

Theme	Number	%
Boredom/rural isolation/lack of transport	18	26
Crime/country lines/substance misuse	13	19
Poverty/ lack of opportunity	9	13
Online risks/social media	6	9
Need for SEND support	2	3
Mental health	2	3
Child sexual exploitation	4	6
Other	9	13
Comment but no needs mentioned	5	7
Total	68	100%

Example comments: Needs of Children (Public Survey)

- *There is nothing here for young people, no opportunities, no career options. No options for socialising or experiencing young culture. South Shropshire is not sustainable for young people. Low wages, high prices and no cultural diversity.*
- *Mental health services are in crisis, our Shropshire young people are not supported. SEN cuts have left this vulnerable group isolated. Policing cuts have left young people without adequate support.*
- *I see all these impacting the lives of our young people in our town to some extent or another, particularly those from more deprived backgrounds who are more at risk - and this deprivation has different forms, it is not only financial!*
- *some parts of the county very rural and access to transport very limited No drop in for children to discuss how they are feeling or offload, e.g. beam drop in would be good in Oswestry, Shrewsbury too far for a lot of families to get too and expensive and limited on public transport, especially if more siblings within the household.*
- *Infrequent and expensive public transport - not only makes it difficult for them to access activities independently but also makes it difficult for them to meet up with their friends, meaning that many teenage boys resort to spending all their time on their games consoles and communicating with their friends through the online facilities that some games enable.*
- *CSE. School exclusions. Massive pressure on TMBSS.*

Table 13 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations Survey: Needs of Children

Theme	Number	%
Poverty/ lack of opportunity	9	23
Boredom/rural isolation/lack of transport	9	23
Lack of adult/parent role models and support	7	18
Mental health	5	13
Crime/country lines/substance misuse	5	13
Online risks/social media/bullying	2	5
Other (including school exclusions)	6	15
Total	39	100%

Example comments: Needs of Children (Group and Organisations Survey)

- *To the outsider, south Shropshire is a beautiful place to live, with little visual evidence of social problems. Over half the area is designated an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and all is recognised as sparsely populated. But it is not without its problems; from the perspective of young people we have done a lot of research and consultation with them. This youth led peer consultation report was published as Unzipped (2010 and again in 2012). Young people expressed their needs to be:*
 - *Complicated; due largely to the rural nature of the local geography, causing problems regarding choice of education, work and feelings of isolation.*
 - *Increased socialising with their peers, which was limited by distances and poor ICT networks.*
 - *That they had something to contribute to their communities but weren't always encouraged to do so.*
 - *Problems with self-esteem and that in some areas, there is a low opinion of their age group. Also in certain areas young people have a low opinion of where they live. Many young people, if they have the choice, migrate and tend to leave the area for higher education and not return.*
 - *Young people living in more remote areas are significantly less visible than those who reside in the towns and subsequently have less of a voice. Through our contact with young people, we know that a high percentage either live in an area of deprivation or live in rural isolation; many of these young people face a multitude of issues including social isolation, emotional problems and a general lack of self-esteem or motivation. Using youth workers knowledge, we have found that: Over a quarter of young people we work with are known to be at risk of exclusion from school. 50% of young people we work with are involved in risk taking behaviour and/or being involved in criminal activity. The percentage of young people known to come from dysfunctional families/complex homes is 29%.*
- *Full range of health issues e.g. low mood, depression, suicide. Full range of social issues. e.g. Going missing. Teenage pregnancy. Bereavement. Loss. Parental separation, marriage break up. Domestic violence. Looked after children. Multiple school changes. Language barriers - use of interpreting services. School refusal. Poverty. Family use of food banks. Housing issues.*
- *Loneliness and isolation is a big problem and lack of opportunities we are seeing for young people to access skills and career training. Many teenagers, especially in rural communities are bored and this affecting how they behave in school and we are noticing increase in environmental damage and lack of environmental empathy and increase in anti-social behaviour with young people saying they are bored there is nothing for them to do and nothing for them to aspire to.*
- *Lack of support for mental health issues. Nothing out there except for high end issues. Lack of understanding generally of what Youth workers are trained to do. No-one to listen to young peoples' issues/concerns. Lack of Youth workers after we were all made redundant, and so, less of us to act as advocates for the young people that we work with.*

Table 13 displays the results when groups and organisations were asked the same question as members of the public. The two sets of results highlight common feedback from members of the public and local groups and organisations. The next question was 'What issues do you think young people in your local area most need support with? What barriers are there stopping young people from reaching their potential? Tables 14 and 15 summarise the comments received. There were 73 comments from members of the public and 36 from groups and organisations. The comments were very comprehensive and many covered different themes within each comment. For members of the public the top themes were the need for youth workers and youth services, the importance of safe meeting places for children and young people and the need for transport to overcome rural isolation. Examples comments are included to provide a better understanding of the feedback given as part of the consultation.

Table 14 Comment Themes – Public Survey: Support needs and barriers

Theme	Number	%
Youth worker support and youth services	29	29
Safe meeting places	21	21
Transport	11	11
Need for parental support/ adult role models	8	8
Confidence, understanding among community	7	7
Isolation/mental health	6	6
Poverty/lack of opportunity	4	4
Other	13	13
Total	99	100%

Example comments: Barriers and Support Needs (Public Survey)

- *Young people need somewhere safe and warm to meet regularly. They need adults that they trust and relate well to their needs. Isolation is a barrier for those who live in rural areas or the smaller towns.*
- *Young people need someone to listen to them who isn't a parent or a teacher. A trained youth worker is the person in the middle to whom young people can turn in confidence. This is the missing link which, with the demise of youth provision nationally, has contributed to the problems faced by young people today.*
- *The push pull factors are heavily impacting on many YP in all our society, school has become increasingly more prescriptive, issues arise in class, where some YP don't feel they fit in or belong, as a result negative behaviours increase, this results in potential exclusions - parents struggle to manage and find themselves pushing them away, where YP then feel the pull from the gangs, where there vulnerability is so obvious to the gangs and they are instantly accepted.*
- *Issues as above, but drugs, use of social media and bullying, alcohol, peer pressure/loneliness....even within a crowd! Barriers can be ignorance of what is on offer, negative peer pressure, lack of appropriate educational support/success, poor self-image/confidence, things going wrong in the family/home, as well as opportunity to access the help/advice they may need. This may not be there in the first place if 'our society' has not put the necessary infrastructure in place!! (Youth workers/ buildings, etc).*
- *The ability to interact socially in a safe and sustainable way. Access to life learning and skills-based clubs. Positive options for social, physical, mental wellness.*
- *Help with mental health and anxiety issues. Preventing bullying and being forced into situations they do not want to be in, e.g. joining gangs, bullying others. A safe place for young people to be able to hang out in and off the streets.*

Table 15 Comment Themes – Groups and Organisations Survey: Support needs and barriers

Theme	Number	%
Youth worker support and youth services/activities	17	32
Safe meeting places/ venue to disclose concerns	11	21
Transport	4	8
Risks such as drugs and Child Sexual Exploitation	4	8
Isolation/mental health	4	8
Poverty/lack of opportunity	3	6
Need for parental support/ adult role models	2	4
Other	8	15
Total	53	100%

Example comments: Barriers and Support Needs (Group and Organisations Survey)

- *They are disenfranchised by school and may come from a long line of unemployment and they are just made to feel useless and not worth anything and this further backed up by the governments lack of investment in this area to help prevent mental health issues, unemployment. So, it is left to NGO's like ours to support this provision. We have an opportunity to help turn young people lives around, break cycles and upskill young people who suffer from deprivation but at this time there is very limited support out there.*
- *Young People in Oswestry are at great risk of both Child Criminal and Child Sexual Exploitation. There are concerns in Oswestry around County Lines, and Young People accessing alternative provision, who are waiting outside of School for students, enticing them into joining in with their behaviour. Once they have started down this path, it is very difficult to get out of it. If there was more provision for Young People, they would be better supported to discourage them from getting involved, or once they are, getting out of it, without fear of repercussions. With better support, Young People would be more likely to talk to someone about the concerns they have, or what they have been getting involved with, which can then be used to provide the police with more intelligence.*
- *Transport big issue. Young people need qualified and trained youth workers to work with them to organise activities, to build relationships with so that they can disclose issues/bullying etc. and to help them make the most of opportunities available to them socially, educationally and work-wise.*
- *Life skills and understanding the world at large, inclusion, tolerance. As a small more rural area opportunities to meet a wide range of people are limited. Meeting more people would enhance basic life skills and social opportunities.*
- *Regular, long term, trusted and professional adult provision to advise and support aspirations, help with emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. This needs to be immediately local i.e. in Wem, see below. Lack of experience of the wider world, largely because of transport costs and limited family experience or confidence. Our young people e.g. have little understanding of University or the application process, have not visited e.g. Birmingham or engaged with a wider cultural offer. Coupled with a lack of engagement with traditional rural pursuits, such as fishing, walking/cycling in countryside, this limits their confidence and aspirations. Local drop in facilities to provide safe, trusted supervised meeting places which offer an alternative to 'smoking weed on the Rec' for older teens.*
- *A lack of voluntary Adult Leaders are few and far between and with the safeguarding and other responsibilities tends to put many off from taking a role on. This results in the lack of welcoming safe places to go for the youth of today.*

The top three concerns for groups and organisations are the same as those highlighted within the public survey but the example comments show a deeper concern about the complexity of needs and issues within communities. The last example comment made reference to youth services workforce issues and anticipating that this could be a theme (it is a topical issue nationally) a question was included in the survey for groups and organisations: 'The youth service workforce is essential in the provision of services and it is something Government is currently focusing on. Do you have any comments to make about workforce issues?' 25 comments were made by groups and organisations and the themes within those comments have been summarised in Table 16.

Table 16 Comment Themes – Groups and Organisations Survey: Workforce Issues

Theme	Number	%
Need for long term investment/appropriate pay and reward	9	31
Impact of cuts on workforce	8	28
Reliance on volunteers/need to recognise	3	10
Provision of training	1	3
Engage the workforce	1	3
Other	7	24
Total	29	100%

The most common issues raised within the comments were linked and included a lack of appropriate investment in the youth sector workforce and the impact of austerity. Example comments are included below:

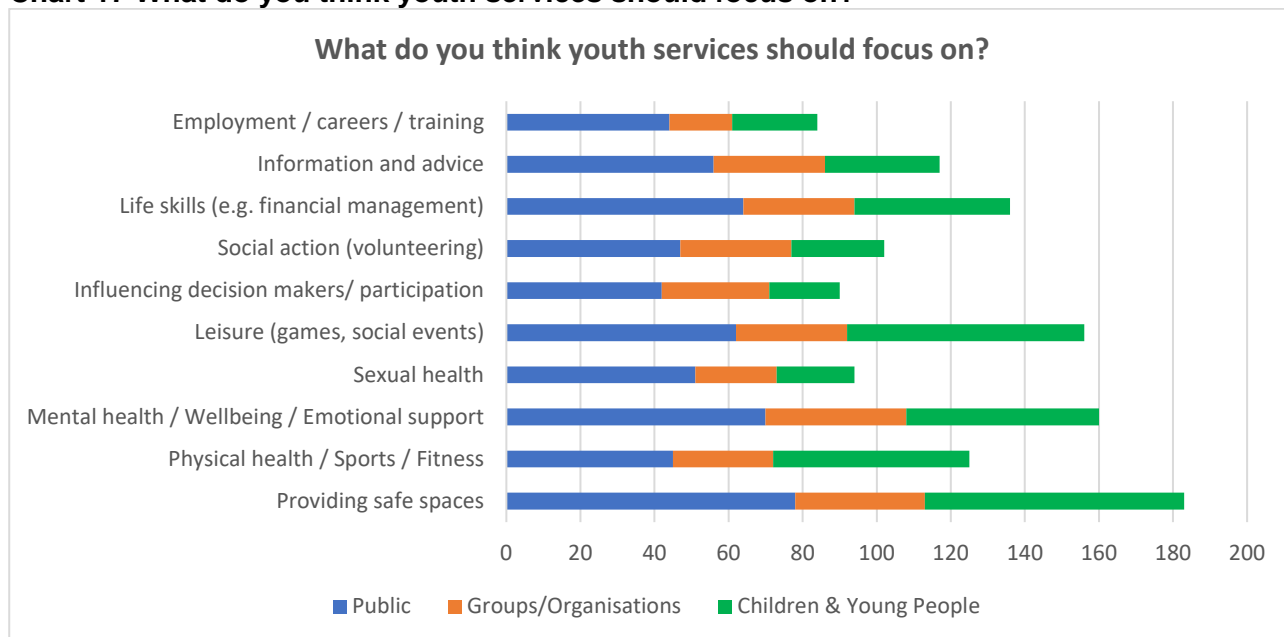
Example comments: Workforce Issues (Group and Organisations Survey)

- *Our workforce has been decimated. There are very few qualified youth workers left in Shropshire, and the ones that are left are very demoralised. Over the last 6 years we have not been consulted, with decisions being made above our heads by people who do not understand what we do. We have been passed from pillar to post, being put under various managers, none of which are actually youth workers. We need to be listened to, we are the ones at ground level working with these extremely vulnerable young people. We feel that our views just do not count. So many experienced youth workers have been made redundant, and as a result will not want to return to the profession due to the way they have been treated.*
- *Commitment to provision needs to be long term and actually be long term so skills and knowledge garnered can be built upon for the benefit and growth of our young people.*
- *...Youth workers are notoriously poorly paid, which does not help. There would need to be a way to ensure that the pay was enough to appeal to the right people.*
- *Youth Leadership should be seen as a professional, vital and highly thought of career. At the moment what is required is pathetic and imbalanced towards Health and Safety and is totally inadequate for the task. It is very reliant on volunteers who may have demanding jobs and families but would probably appreciate a 10 day training on child care, another 10 days on administration, 10 days on planning activities which would make the task less taxing and stressful. Then ideally by providing a number of thriving well run clubs with professionals and volunteers.*
- *Allowing a workforce with a capacity to do their job effectively in key areas to help to make long lasting change, job security and highly skilled individuals.*

5. Future Support

A key theme within the consultation was looking to the future and gaining information that will support future delivery of youth support. A range of questions were included within the surveys and questions were asked face to face. The first question, asked of all survey groups, was 'What do you think youth services should focus on?' Chart 17 shows the results.

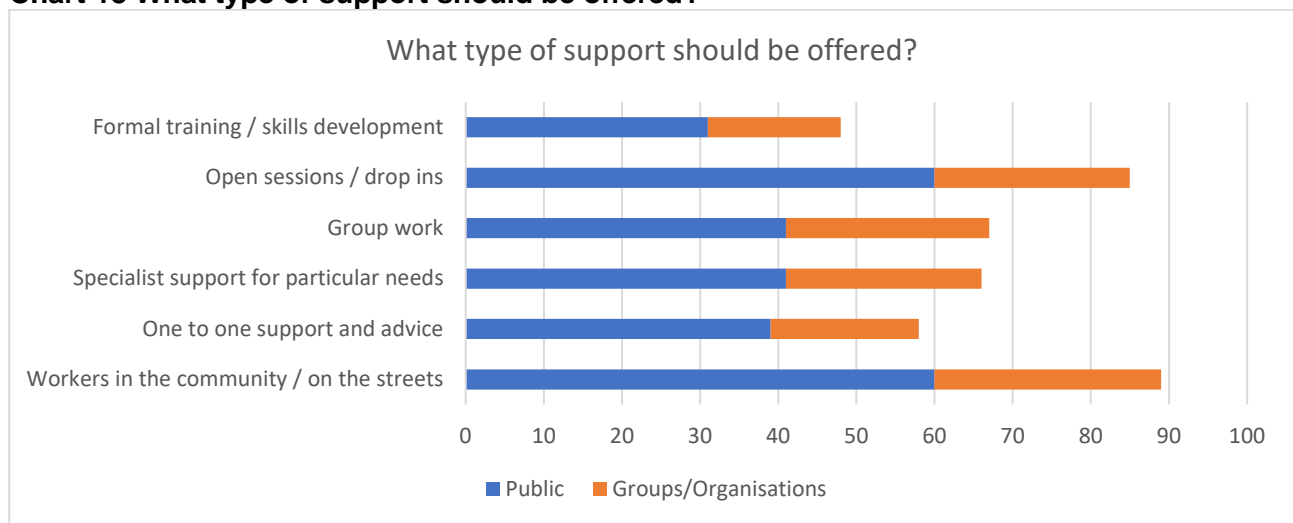
Chart 17 What do you think youth services should focus on?



There was little variation between categories for groups and organisations. The results were slightly more varied for members of the public and children and young people. Across all groups the biggest response was received for providing safe spaces, mental health and wellbeing and leisure. Children and young people were also keen on physical health/sports provision, whilst adults were more likely to select life skills, information and advice.

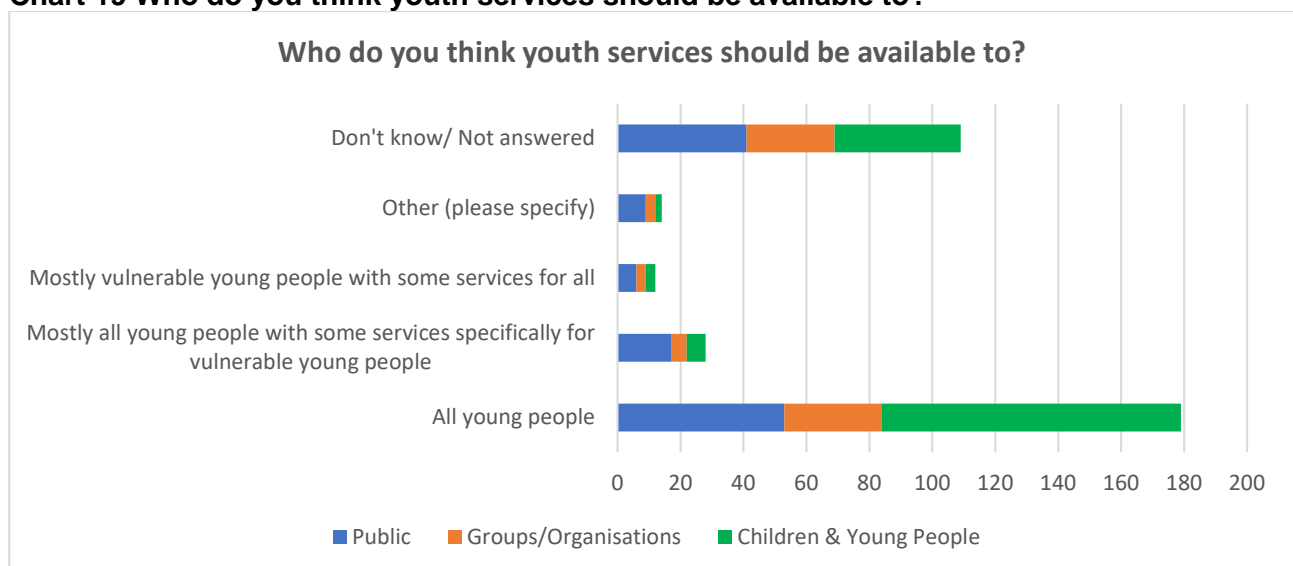
Children and young people were asked 'Where would you prefer to access youth support?'. 43% would like support via a youth club, 15% at home, 13% at school/college and 11% outdoors. Members of the public were asked 'Where do you think youth support should be based?' the results were inconclusive with similar responses for all options, but community venues and youth clubs were the top results. Members of the public and groups and organisations were asked 'What type of support should be offered?' and Chart 18 displays the response.

Chart 18 What type of support should be offered?



Overall the feedback suggests a demand for universal and open access provision. This was confirmed with the responses to the question 'Who do you think youth services should be available to?'. (See chart 19).

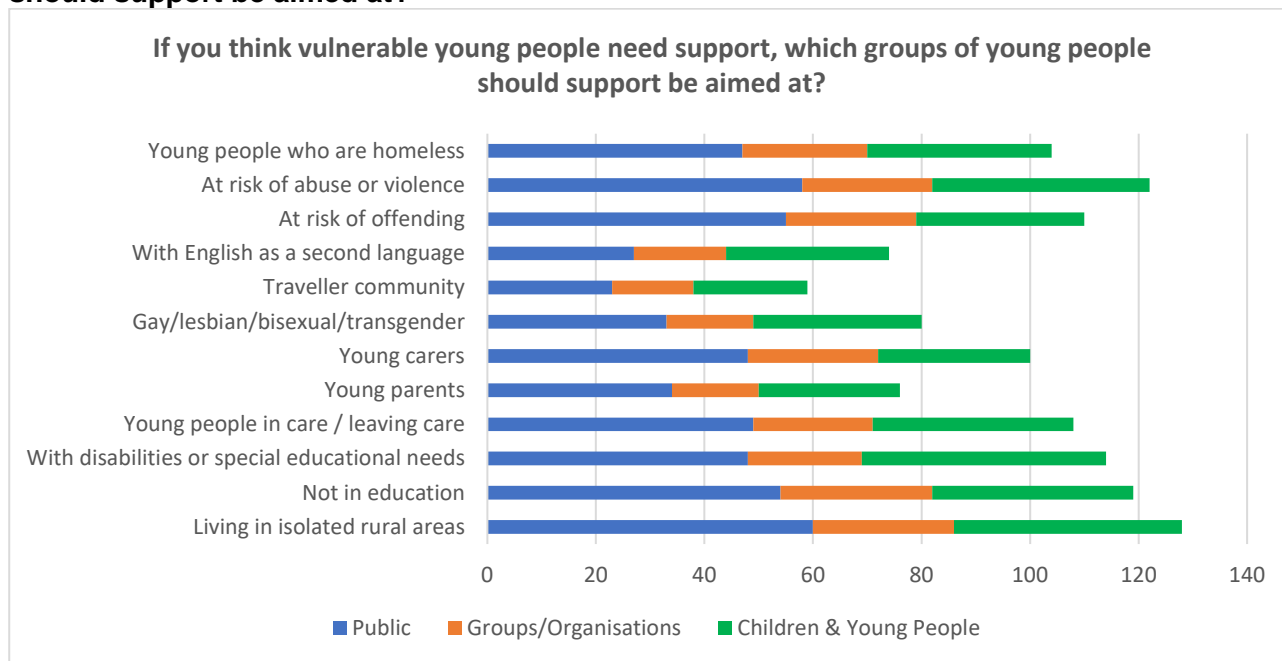
Chart 19 Who do you think youth services should be available to?



The responses to these questions and the written comments highlight that members of the public, children and young people and local groups and organisations want to see support offered to all young people across the county. This is a significant challenge without increases in resources.

Although there is demand for support for all children and young people, the surveys asked 'If you think vulnerable young people need support, which groups of young people should support be aimed at?' Many of those who selected 'all young people' still provided a response to this question. Chart 20 highlights that children living in isolated rural areas are considered a higher priority than children at risk of abuse or violence (second top category). Those not in education, those with disabilities/special educational needs, those at risk of offending and young people in care/leaving care are also all considered in need of the most support.

Chart 20 If you think vulnerable young people need support, which groups of young people should support be aimed at?



A few additional questions were included within the theme of future support:

- What type of workers should support be delivered by? (Asked groups and organisations only)
- Which agencies / organisations should support be provided by? (Asked groups and organisations only)
- When do you think youth services should be available? (Asked only in the public survey)

The first two questions didn't result in a clear response. Groups and organisations felt that youth support should be delivered by all types of worker (qualified youth workers, support workers and other local services) and that all agencies should deliver services (public sector, schools/collages and town and parish councils). The third question was slightly more helpful in that there was a preference for youth support to be delivered Monday to Friday evenings (6pm or 7pm) and during school holidays. Straight after school was less popular and weekends were not preferred.

The last questions asked about future support were both designed to attract free text comments and the results of these are included in Tables 17 and 18 and in example comments. Members of the public were asked 'Considering the current social and economic situation and limited budgets for youth provision, how should support be organised/prioritised to ensure Shropshire's young people have the best possible futures?' There were 62 comments made, some included multiple themes. Overall, the mention of limited resources led to a call to divert funds away from other service areas and into youth support, this was followed by providing local youth workers and building partnerships.

Table 17 Comment themes – Public Survey: How future support should be organised

Theme	Number	%
Divert funds into youth services/investment	18	25
Providing local youth workers/understanding different local needs	16	23
Partnership with other organisations/businesses	11	15
Infrastructure support for volunteers/groups	9	13
Engagement/consultation/measure needs	9	13
Other	8	11
Total	71	100%

Example comments: How future support should be organised (public survey)

- *Not certain but I feel that Shropshire Council should delay any changes for at least 12 months and see what funding may come down from Government. It would give SC time to properly consult with all people who this will impact on. How will between 6-10 centrally based outreach youth workers be able to provide the support that many part time youth workers placed strategically around the county currently provide?*
- *Local Authority & Central Government Budgets have always been finite. Yes, it is a fact that austerity has significantly reduced the financial support statutory agencies can offer. However, money is not always the answer-think creatively. There are volunteer groups, charities, commercial interests, philanthropic organisations etc who if asked to come together on a positive platform could and will work creatively in partnership to support initiatives. It is time we realised that we can no longer just expect Councils or Government Departments to throw money at problems/set up services. We have to think for ourselves in genuine partnership to be creative to develop our communities for everyone.*
- *I suggest a hybrid approach based on partnership. For instance, fully qualified youth workers working with volunteers. I have had successful experience in designing and leading youth work-related projects like this in various countries. It works.*
- *By spending now, it will save the council money in the long term as some of these young people, will due to the provision, never hit the social care threshold, which they could do without it. Prevention is better than having to access more expensive services later on in life. Listen to what young people want. Also listen to the young adults that accessed the youth provision before the cuts and how it has helped them in adult life and what worked for them.*
- *It is a bit like the health service if you don't look at prevention you will have problems in the future which cost the nation more. I believe that not providing youth services and tackling their problems it will cost us more in the long run with court cases, prisons etc. I believe that all youngsters should be given the same opportunities and to priorities one area above another is wrong.*

Groups and organisations were asked a slightly different question to obtain feedback on the design of future support 'How can young people in most need of support best be engaged and supported?'. 30 comments were provided.

Table 18 displays the summary of the points/themes from the 30 comments. The feedback, perhaps could have been anticipated, in that many groups and organisations wrote about the need to continue the youth work taking place within communities, maintaining youth clubs and venues. The comments suggested that people fear the consultation will lead to service losses. Other comments referred to the need to engage young people in the future of youth services, the need to build partnerships to respond to needs and the importance of schools and referral processes between local services.

Table 18 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations: How to best engage and support children and young people

Theme	Number	%
Providing youth workers in local communities/understanding different local needs	16	41
Youth clubs	5	13
Venues and meeting places	5	13
Engagement/consultation/measure needs	4	10
Support through schools	2	5
Partnerships/ referral pathways	2	5
Infrastructure support for volunteers/groups	1	3
Other	4	10
Total	39	100%

Example comments: How to best engage and support children (groups and organisations)

- *Through independent safe places and people with whom young people have built up a high level of trust over a long period of time.*
- *Young people need consistency, youth workers that they know and trust. it needs time and resources to enable this to happen. Some of our project work take up to 18 months to see any significant change in young people. SSYF have developed relationships with young people for life because of early intervention programmes. Access to services that attract young people are key.*
- *In most cases, support should be targeted outside of School. A lot of young people that require support, have anxiety around attending, or simply do not want to attend. They are easily persuaded to truant and some may take it further and find themselves permanently excluded. Trying to put support in via school, can be difficult if students mistrust staff or the 'institution' of school.*
- *Universal consultation with young people; using all services already in contact with young people e.g. health, social groups, education/training, housing. Participation/consultation to be reinstated as a right for all young people.*

6. The Proposed Model

One of the aims of the consultation was to obtain feedback on a proposed model for the future, and how Shropshire Council will use its resources to support youth services. Box 1 displays the summarised model and this was shared through the surveys.

Box 1 Summary of Proposed Model

Shropshire Council is proposing a change in the way youth support is provided in Shropshire. The proposals for change are:

That a new model of youth work is implemented that incorporates, both:

- universal, open access groups (open to all, not restricted by appointments or invitations e.g. youth club sessions); and
- targeted support (addressing particular issues) through outreach or detached youth work (meeting young people in the community where they gather together and spend time).

The model would include:

- More emphasis placed on working with the most vulnerable young people and addressing issues of concern within communities.
- Youth workers employed to cover an area of Shropshire so they can get to know their communities. It is suggested that a team of 6 workers would be required.

- Development of new local networks where youth workers link to schools/colleges, voluntary sector groups and organisations, town and parish councils etc.
- Development of stronger referral networks between youth workers and specialist providers such as mental health workers, school nurses etc.
- Development of a stronger locality approach where there is more influence and support provided by town councils (and clusters of parish councils).

All groups were asked how they felt about the proposed model. In total 100 people agreed with the proposal (45%) 79 disagreed (36%) and 43 didn't have an opinion (19%). Those who disagreed were children and young people and they expressed concerns that their understanding was the proposal would lead to their youth clubs being closed down. Members of the public and groups and organisations were in favour of the proposals overall. Excluding children from the results highlights that 64% agree and 28% disagree (see charts 21 and 22).

Chart 21 How do you feel about the proposed model?

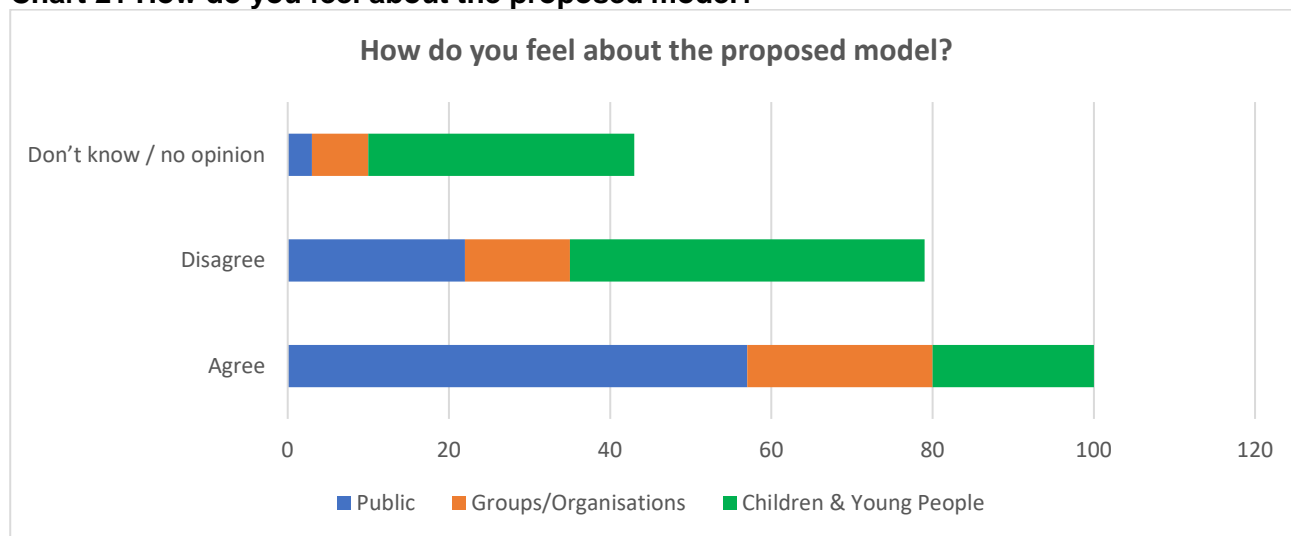
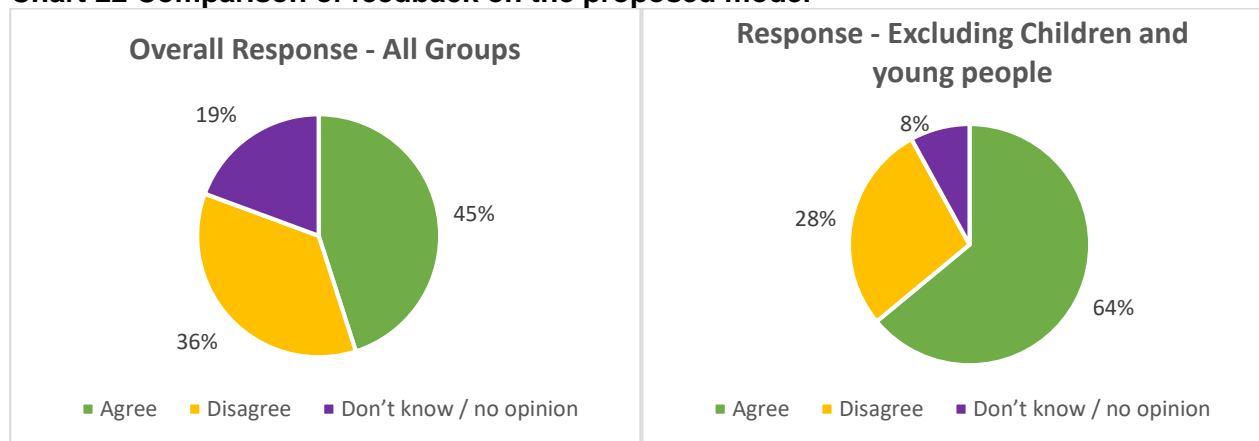


Chart 22 Comparison of feedback on the proposed model



The reasons for the opinions are explored in more detail below.

Positive Feedback

All three surveys asked the question 'If you like the proposed model, why is that?' There were 50 comments from members of the public, 20 from groups and organisations (not including the detailed written consultation responses) and 35 comments from children and young people (not

including the face to face feedback). The 105 comments received have all been read and categorised and the results are shown in tables 19, 20 and 21 below. Examples are also included to give a better flavour of feeling and opinions.

Table 19 Comment themes – Public Survey: Reasons Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Flexible	13	22
Fair/inclusive	9	15
Focus on most vulnerable	9	15
Qualified youth workers	7	12
Partnership approach	6	10
Local focus/outreach	4	7
Based on a strategy/plan	3	5
OK if resourced adequately/some concerns	9	15
Total	60	100%

Example comments: Reasons Like Proposed Model (public survey)

- *I like a "core and cluster" model and the fact that it appears that services are going to the YP and not expecting the YP to always go to "safe" venues/locations.*
- *I like that the proposal is targeted at the most vulnerable young people but is open to all. I like the proposal to develop local networks, referral networks and taking a locality approach.*
- *Because we have a lot of young people getting into trouble, who do not attend youth clubs and so currently have no one to turn to, this would offer something that we are currently lacking.*
- *Because it is working with and in communities, not applying the same approach across the whole county.*
- *Working in partnership with local communities, maximising the funding potential not just corporately commissioning one provider and one approach for the main market towns.*
- *It builds local knowledge and locally based support, available to most young people in places they can get to, hopefully.*
- *It appears to be as inclusive as possible. However, I do doubt that a team of 6 is sufficient for a county as large and widespread as Shropshire. There are long distances to cover between urban areas and this could lead to time wasted in travel rather than providing support. I would favour a system of urban based support workers in the major towns, together with a peripatetic team with members able to be deployed to areas of greatest need at any given time.*

Table 20 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations: Reasons Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Partnership approach	7	27
Local focus/outreach	5	19
Fair/inclusive/ wide ranging	3	12
Focus on most vulnerable	2	8
Qualified youth workers	2	8
Based on a strategy/plan/ a model	1	4
OK if resourced adequately/some concerns	3	12
Other comments	3	12
Total	26	100%

Example comments: Reasons Like Proposed Model (groups and organisations)

- *It sounds positive, but there is a lot to achieve with limited resources. We wonder if there needs to be greater emphasis placed on delivering either the universal offer, or the work around more vulnerable young people – spreading resources too thin could result in limited impact in either priority?*

- *We are aware that the priorities of the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner's diversionary network may be moving more towards intervention and there is a risk that all resources will be targeted at 'firefighting'. We are keen for wider conversations to ensure that we work collaboratively to capture and work towards the full picture locally.....*
- *Regardless of where they are hosted (VCS or LA), we feel it is essential that there is a commitment to collaborate with the VCS and that we can work together to attract additional grants and investment to benefit young people.*
- *We have a fantastic provision. Guides has a fantastic provision - I'm sure the football, cricket, swimming, youth clubs, Boy Brigade, Cadet Force all do as well. Let us help. Understand what we do and send people our way.*
- *Working together will target more young people and have more impact.*
- *It looks like it will support the work we volunteers do in the community.*

Table 21 Comment themes – Children and Young People: Reasons Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Some support is available/ there will be people to talk to	6	40
Mental health is mentioned in the model	3	20
Specialist support will be available	2	13
The model includes schools	1	7
Everyone will receive support	1	7
Like generally (no explanation)	2	13
Total	15	100%

Example comments: Reasons Like Proposed Model (children and young people)

- *I would like to have someone to talk to that's not my mum or anything to do with school, but I don't like my youth club.*
- *Any help is better than none. I have had no help since I have left school.*
- *Because there would be people to talk to and I wouldn't have to go to a youth club if I didn't want to.*
- *Helping with mental health.*

The 9 written consultation responses also provided feedback on the model. Overall the written responses tended to highlight questions, concerns and calls for further engagement rather than messages in support of the model. A few positive comments are included as examples below:

Example comments: Extracts from written consultation responses

- *The localised youth worker model provides an opportunity for young people to develop a good level of trust so they will be more effective. They will also develop stronger community links which will enhance their knowledge of soft services that can support the young people in their area.*
- *We recognise that a stronger locality approach is needed with Town Councils exercising a greater role, perhaps convening local fora of stakeholders to promote local collaboration and greater civic recognition. They will, hopefully, be able to learn from each other in developing this new role. Town Councils should also be able to look to feeder Parish Councils for financial support.*

It is clear that there are slightly different reasons why the people like the model but there are common themes including:

- the focus on partnership,
- the recognition that there are different needs in different local areas and that a local approach is important,
- that the needs of the most vulnerable young people are recognised; and
- that the model includes qualified youth workers as a core element.

Negative Feedback

Survey respondents were also asked to explain if they didn't like the proposed model. The results from all three survey groups are shown below. The tables summarise the themes from the comments. There were 54 comments in total (20 from members of the public, 14 from groups and organisations and 20 from children and young people). Some people mentioned more than one theme within their comments.

Table 22 Comment themes – Public Survey: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Too few workers (team of 6 too small)	11	41
Focus on vulnerable not universal provision	6	22
Fear of cuts/ overall losses	3	11
Inadequately resourced	2	7
Not costed/doesn't feel well thought through	2	7
Concern loss of infrastructure support	2	7
Pushing responsibility to others/ local councils	1	4
Total	27	100%

Example comments: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model (public survey)

- *Sounds like an unachievable model for only 6 people to carry out. Shropshire is a large rural county - how can 6 people cover such a large area and provide support to youth on a regular basis?*
- *How are 6 youth workers going to effectively deliver what the vast number of Shropshire young people desperately need? This is shocking! Where is funding for mental health and SEN facilities and trained professionals in these areas? More policing on the streets?*
- *6 youth workers would be inadequate to cover this amount of work in such a large county. This model does not appear to have been costed well e.g. who would support voluntary clubs with DBS checks? Safeguarding training?*
- *The model needs to be for all, not targeted or many needy kids will be missed. Putting the onus on parish councils is pushing the problem to others. Where there is not the skill or knowledge.*
- *I understand that you are proposing to withdrawal funding from SYA - in my opinion this is incredibly short sighted of SC. If the town or parish councils can't find the funding to support the youth clubs, I believe there is a real danger many clubs will close - then you will loose the impetus on the ground of these clubs that are already up and running. All this at a time when government is proposing more investment into youth clubs.....*
- *I think that focusing only on the most vulnerable will potentially create more vulnerable children in need of help. We need to be able to provide a consistent service which is open to all children which can help guide children in making positive life choices.*

Table 23 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Too few youth workers in the model	5	26
Reliance on town and parish councils	4	21
Needs more universal provision	3	16
Fear loss of infrastructure support	2	11
Fear rural areas will miss out	2	11
Feels rushed/ not robust	2	11
Other	1	5
Total	19	100%

Example comments: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model (groups and organisations)

- *The proposed model offers a good way forward if it is properly resourced and coherent. Much of the proposal is already delivered but becomes vulnerable because the financing hasn't been agreed, relies on Town and Parish Councils precept to pay for its club delivery with insufficient time to sort this out this year. (Push the start back 12 months and work up a strategic vision with everyone in the sector). SC already employ youth workers in schools (through Public health). Why try to develop new networks when the voluntary sector and SALC already have them, use them and they are valued? But they become vulnerable if SC withdraw it's infrastructure funding. Commissioning the new work out to the VCSCA would strengthen and build on those networks. Town & Parish councils are not all in a position to contribute.*
- *This model is focused on vulnerable young people. I agree this has to be a focus. However just 6 people seems scant. How did we come up with this number? What's missing, is how we support a network of voluntary and professional youth clubs to provide services in a way that they can operate within the legal framework but can be self-managed and innovative. This can be held at a Shropshire level and be low cost. Parish councils can play a role, but they are the least qualified to be a hub.*
- *The model is based on working with the most vulnerable young people in the community, and even though I believe they should have the help they deserve, you cannot dismiss the youth that are currently being cared for. It should be for all youths or not at all. This proposal could well mean the stopping of much needed funding to keep our youth club going for years to come. I have spoken to many people in the local community and there is a real fondness for the youth club that stretches back over 40 years which means it works. Why not work with the youth club, bring it up to spec, and develop it to do more.*
- *There is much evidence that regular, trusted, professional engagement in safe venues (e.g. youth clubs) for 7-20 year olds works for vulnerable young people and as prevention of young people becoming vulnerable later. There is no indication of how Town and Parish Councils might fund youth activities or how voluntary clubs would be supported or leaders trained. In our experience, troubled young teenagers will not respond to irregular outreach workers who will not be able to offer a creative exciting alternative to that offered more destructively on the streets.*
 - *Who will do our DBS checks in future?*
 - *Will staff still come and deliver safeguarding courses to us?*
 - *Will we be able to borrow equipment to supplement our club resources?*
 - *Will we still get regular support worker visits?*
 - *Who will help us with policies and procedures?*
 - *Who will deliver volunteer training in Youth Work?*
 - *Who will deliver Young Leaders' Training for our leaders of the future?*
 - *Will the new workers help us to write funding applications?*
 - *Who will represent us strategically on area, county, regional and national bodies?*
 - *If we are struggling to find volunteers who will help us?*

Table 24 Comment themes – Children and Young People: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model

Theme	Number	%
Targeted and not open to all	21	54
Keep as is/don't want any change	9	23
Enjoy youth club	5	13
Concerned that street-based contact won't work	1	3
Concerned that town and parish councils will not support	1	3
Comment without explanation	2	5
Total	39	100%

Example comments: Reasons Don't Like Proposed Model (children and young people)

- *It is more aimed / doesn't apply to everyone.*

- *I think everyone deserves to come to youth club. We all love it. Although it's important for problems to be sorted a big help for people to come and be with friends.*
- *Because everyone should be given the opportunities whether it be little or big problem*
- *Because youth club is a fun, athletic club where everyone feels welcome. I feel it is wrong to stop clubs.*
- *We like our Youth Club being for our age range. We feel safe there, helped to create it and enjoy going to it each week. We would like to have information and support here, with friends we know and adult helpers we trust.*
- *Only the kids who don't behave get support.*

The written feedback received included some points that reflected feedback from the surveys but there were also other points around the detail of future delivery. Some extracts are included below to help highlight some of the issues raised.

Example comments: Extracts from written consultation responses

- *It is concerning that only 6 youth workers are proposed to cover all of Shropshire. If the workers are spread too thinly, they will be less effective.*
- *We feel that the appointment of 6 full time workers as suggested in your proposal document located in key locations is flawed. We know from our experience that having a team of part-time youth workers is essential to providing structured activity for young people. We currently work with a full-time qualified youth worker and a team of 19 part-time workers ranging in their breadth of qualifications. Additionally, not having someone who has an overarching strategic responsibility for the service will result in inefficiency and inequality.*
- *If Shropshire Council is proposing to reduce its role and responsibility in this area, it needs to define what financial and organisational support it is willing to give to Town Councils, upon which they can depend.*
- *In conclusion we do recognise that you do wish to be fair and equitable across the countyBut this could only work on the basis that the issues in relation to young people across the county are comparable, which we all know that is not the case.*
- *The proposals in the consultation are very worrying as they contain so little detail about how the changes will affect the everyday running of the club.*
- *The Town Council recognises and welcomes the need for more support for the most vulnerable but is concerned that the proposals seem to dismiss the invaluable early intervention work carried out by Youth Clubs already.*
- *...the Town Council is of the opinion that this consultation is misleading as so much vital detail has not been provided.....The Council is concerned about the impact any cuts resulting from the introduction of this new model will have on the existing youth provision in the county. These proposals completely fail to recognise the years of volunteer hours that have gone into the establishment of successful youth clubs across the county. There is now a real fear that all the work and goodwill will now be undermined resulting in the young people in market towns becoming more isolated and vulnerable than ever.*

The main messages received through the feedback are:

- that the team of 6 workers proposed seems too small to meet need,
- that adequate investment must be provided for a sustainable and effective model,
- that there is a fear of losing universal youth provision,
- that without support youth clubs will close;
- that town and parish councils are not all ready/equipped to take on a role providing local support to youth clubs; and
- that those involved in delivering youth services feel more detail is needed and wish to be engaged further.

Impacts and concerns

Any proposed changes or models need to explore perceptions of impact and concerns so that, where possible they can be addressed within decision making processes. Children and young people were not asked about impact, but members of the public and groups and organisations were asked 'If you do have concerns, would there be any negative impacts on children and young people or on any other groups within the community?' 47 public survey respondents provided comments and 12 groups and organisations.

Table 25 Comment themes – Public Survey: Impact and Concerns

Theme	Number	%
Insufficient capacity/will miss people who need support	18	37
Loose community led approach/volunteers/SYA	9	18
Rural areas will miss out	6	12
Reduced prevention will mean long term needs increase	4	8
Lack of consistent, ongoing support	3	6
Children with SEND or other needs won't be supported	3	6
Other	6	12
Total	49	100%

Example comments: Impact and Concerns (public survey)

- *Mental health services are in crisis, our Shropshire young people are not supported. SEN cuts have left this vulnerable group isolated. Policing cuts have left young people without adequate support.*
- *Afraid it will be done without sufficient resources it will overreach itself and collapse leaving children lost and disappointed.*
- *I like the model but do see the importance of youth clubs and I would hope that these would still be available for all of our young people if they want them.*
- *It all sounds good...and is indeed what has been meant to have been happening BUT the point that there should be a stronger link suggested in this model between the youth provision and local town councils/clusters of parish councils is a poisoned chalice! It could mean that the County Council with all their powers, central position for information and guidance, etc. is leaving most/all the funding to these local bodies as well. This is not equitable as they hold the Council tax and then expect the local council to tax again through their precept if a service is to be delivered as the model expects - thus double taxation!.....*
- *I still feel that not enough support and time will be given to the young people in this rural county. It is not fair to give young people only a small piece of support. If you are going to offer them a service then it needs to be across the whole county, not just cherry picked.*
- *The focus is placing too much reliance on the quality and provision of professional Youth Workers, you are missing a trick. There are other non-professional groups, charities, organisations - some of whom are already working to support sections of local youth. Bring everyone together to support their communities then everyone will benefit. Youth Worker teams cannot have all the answers, their budgets will be finite....*

Table 26 Comment themes – Groups and Organisations: Impact and Concerns

Theme	Number	%
Impact on young people from new model (less universal support)	7	47
Loss of infrastructure support/impact on volunteers	4	27
Less funding	2	13
Gaps from too few workers in the model	1	7
Other	1	7
Total	15	100%

Example comments: Impact and Concerns (groups and organisations)

- *Very much so - local youth clubs will struggle to maintain stable, high quality provision without the financial support of SCC and the professional support of SYA - this will impact on a generation of young people who will lose the provision - this will impact on everyone in our community, as bored youngsters on the streets may resort to destructive behaviour or become vulnerable. Universal access provision (alongside specialist support services) is key to preventative and positive working.*
- *Without support we would find it hard to carry on as volunteers.*
- *Young people might see extra attention paid to some young people and not others, as some kind of reward/ punishment system, which indeed it is. If it is to be "focussed" then by definition the majority of young people won't have any access to all the benefits that a decent youth service would provide.*
- *A recent SYA survey (Agreed and shared with Shropshire Council) found that: 28.57% (38 youth clubs) of clubs would close if the support from SYA & Energize was reduced (SC funded) 33.33% (43 Youth Clubs) would close if there was a problem with venues....*

Example comments: Extracts from written consultation responses

- *If the model is not properly funded it will drain existing resources which may have negative effects on young people within the community.*
- *The role of town and parish councils is not clear. Local councils vary significantly in size and resources so when they wish to help they may need training and back up to increase their capacity. This needs to be included in the budget for youth work.*
- *The net effect of these proposals will be to increase the financial and organisational burden on Town Councils. It is, therefore, essential that Shropshire Council provides financial and organisational support to Town Councils in taking on this additional role and that the resultant financial burden is equitably shared between all Town and Parish Councils, however mediated by Shropshire Council.*
- *...help is needed to support youngsters in most need, we also have to address the needs of all children, and if help is withdrawn, we will end up with more social problems. As part of the LJC [Local Joint Committee] in this area we did a good job in supporting youngsters across the board. The sessions run by TNS during the holidays are a great success.....I have set up a walking football club for the older villagers and a rounders club to encourage parents to come and enjoy sport with their youngsters.....so please find money to support the holiday groups and the youth clubs. I do my bit to help village children so please support us.*
- *Youth clubs are a valuable resource for the communities and small rural communities are marginalised again. They too, pay council tax.*
- *The current suggestion that Parish & Town Councils take over all of the activity currently funded is based on the fact that they are all precepting bodies in their own right and all are willing to increase precepts. The reality is such that there is a wider expectation that the Parish & Town Councils will pick up many services that Shropshire Council no longer wishes to fund and given that many of these Councils have small populations the tax bases are subsequently small resulting in some of the highest Band D precepts in the Country. Added to this there are concerns about the capacity of those bodies to take on new services. Parish Councillors are predominantly volunteers and there is often little more slack on the part of Clerks to take on more.*
- *We have seen over the last three years that schools have sought alternative curriculum work for their vulnerable students, but once those students are excluded, that funding ceases and they lose that valuable support at the most crucial time.*
- *It is anticipated that there will also be an increased burden placed on the local police team and the Town Council as if young people have no safe space to access in the town they will be more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour and will become more vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and drug use.*
- *It sounds positive, but there is a lot to achieve with limited resources. We wonder if there needs to be greater emphasis placed on delivering either the universal offer, or the work around more vulnerable young people – spreading resources too thin could result in limited impact in either priority?*

Overall, fewer comments made by groups and organisations focused on the direct impact on children and young people but concentrated on the potential impact on volunteers, youth clubs and town and parish councils. The public survey focused more on concerns that there would not be support available for all children and young people. The messages on impact were similar to the previous questions; all calling for extra investment and more support for children and young people.

Suggestions and alternatives

It is good practice to accompany any proposal with an invitation to put forward alternative ideas, suggestions and proposals. All three surveys asked 'Do you have any alternative suggestions other than the proposed model?' 35 people made comments within the public survey, 15 in the survey for groups and organisations and 20 children. However, although comments were made, many were not really suggestions or alternatives. A large proportion repeated comments from the sections on "like" or "dislike" covered above.

The overarching message in the public survey was "more!". 6 people asked for more youth workers, 6 for more work to build on existing provision, 6 to place more emphasis on youth clubs, 4 to keep the contract with Shropshire Youth Association, and 4 to refocus on universal provision.

The main message from the groups and organisations survey was to increase funding (6), to build on existing provision (5) and to "keep it as it is" (5). 4 made other comments.

The children and young people's comments followed 2 main themes. 11 children asked to have no change "keep it as it is" and 5 asked to protect the future of youth clubs. There were very few ideas and suggestions but those mentioned were to have youth workers in school, and to look for different sources or income or support.

A few of the written consultation responses focused on suggestions and influencing the future development of the proposals made. These have all been read in full but a few extracts are included below.

Example comments: Extracts from written consultation responses

- *We believe Shropshire Council is in a good position to develop a strategic overview of the services provided by all stakeholders at both a strategic level and local communities including Parish Councils at grassroots level. The development of a Local Youth Partnership in which key stakeholders and deliverers like the SYA and the Town Council are brought together to understand the collective supply and demand is essential to developing deliverable solutions should funding be addressed.*
- *Regardless of where they are hosted (VCS or LA), we feel it is essential that there is a commitment to collaborate with the VCS and that we can work together to attract additional grants and investment to benefit young people.*
- *We believe that a more focussed infrastructure support contract could be entered into that would build the capacity of both voluntary and local council service providers which in turn would benefit more targeted activity.*
- *We feel it would be helpful to have individual youth workers who have a specific locality of Shropshire so that local knowledge is strong and connections can be made.*
- *Rather than having a set programme of delivery / education, we feel it is important to adopt a more holistic approach, understanding the needs of different groups and young people. Some of the more targeted groups or sports clubs may benefit from more specialised training e.g. county lines in boxing clubs.*
- *We would place a great emphasis on speaking to young people to identify what they want to influence developments, rather than putting on youth provision and hoping they come.*

Other comments

The survey responses included 40 additional comments from members of the public and 29 additional comments from groups and organisations. Some of the comments picked up themes already covered through other question responses, and the open nature of the feedback means that it hasn't been categorised, however, some examples are included below.

Example 'Other' Comments – Public Survey

- *There needs to be a greater connection between communities and schools along with youth workers to identify the young people who need additional support. So that those individuals can be offered support to both themselves and the parents.*
- *I would like to see more detail about what the Council intends as I think the current plans look good on paper and read very impressively but they leave many questions unanswered.*
- *Shropshire council could aim to work in partnership with existing providers of youth services within the county rather than 'reinventing the wheel' which would be costly, time consuming, unnecessary and not in the best service for the future of young people*
- *Shropshire council could aim to work in partnership with existing providers of youth services within the county rather than 'reinventing the wheel' which would be costly, time consuming, unnecessary and not in the best service for the future of young people*
- *Whatever you decide, ensuring that the young people are listened to. Making sure that it's a service that moves with the times. As the majority of Shropshire is rural ensuring that support is in place for supporting and reporting issues, such as county lines and carrying of knives.*

Example 'Other' Comments – Groups and Organisations

- *Don't dismantle what you have, at a time when central government are actively starting to rebuild universal youth work. The proposed model is similar to Telford & Wrekin's approach that has been operating for 3 years, have you looked at how it's performing and learned their lessons?*
- *The increasing emergence of knife and gun crime and CSE/ CCE needs tackling now. We need to start with looking at what motivates young people and how to motivate them in different ways in which Youth Workers will be able to have skilled impact.*
- *The proposed model is a good starting point; over time it could be developed and hopefully funding increased.*
- *It is a matter of urgency that young people (including in rural areas) are supported. Already we are seeing the negative impacts of reduced funding following the removal of Shropshire Youth service. Young people need trained youth workers around enough to build strong relationships with to prevent anti-social behaviour, and to help them make life choices and make the most of opportunities available, not parachuted in in times of crisis or only targeted on most needy.*
- *Hopefully, the worst is now over, and Youth Services will now begin to grow again. We need to be brought back 'in-house' to ensure consistency.*
- *We are a fantastic county with a fantastic workforce. We need to help younger people value it and make it work even better.*

7. Conclusion

Overall there is support for the proposed model but the feedback highlights concerns. The main concern is that the new model has limited capacity and will not be adequately resourced. People fear further reductions in youth support following the further impact of austerity. There are hopes that a growing national focus and recognition of the positive role of youth services will bring about national investment. Areas of agreement include the need to work in partnership across all sectors, the importance of valuing volunteers and existing local provision, and the need for qualified youth workers to support those children and young people in most need.