

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR of CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP SERVICES

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDRENS SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 JULY 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	12
TITLE:	YOUTH OFFER CONSULTATION RESPONSE AND FINAL PROPOSAL		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Gavin	PORTFOLIO:	Children & Family services
SERVICE:	Early Help	WARDS:	All
LEAD OFFICER:	Andy Fitton	TEL:	9374688
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the consultation response from young people and the general public in regard to the Youth offer proposal that was set out in a March 2016 ACE report. The report also outlines the Youth offer going forward taking into account the savings targets, in light on feedback and consultation results.
- 1.2 For the purpose of this report Youth offer relates to young people aged 13 to 18 and then up to 25 for young people with learning difficulty and disabilities (LDD). The number of young people aged 13 to 18 in Reading is 9983 as taken from Office of National Statistics mid-year population estimate.
- 1.3 In the Appendix there is:
  - Summary of the consultation responses
  - Equalities impact Assessment.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 In order to achieve the savings target of reducing £750,000 spending on Youth services, as set out within the overall council budgetary position, it is recommended that the proposed changes are agreed:
- 2.2 To continue with a targeted youth offer to young people in the town that ensures that vulnerable young people key outcomes are met.
- 2.3 To work with Readings Voluntary sector partners to continue providing a full range of universal activities and invite partners to particular universal sessions that RBC will not be providing, in RBC buildings.
- 2.4 To continue to offer respite care for both young carers and learning difficulty and disabled young people.
- 2.5 To continue with the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Questioning weekly session.
- 2.6 To refocus our Looked After Children's offer to enable these young people to access local community youth services.
- 2.7 To review the proposal to create a Bridge venue for vulnerable young people to access support with corporate partners, colleagues from the voluntary sector and

young people. More detailed work will confirm back to ACE committee in early 2017 the way forward to enable greater access for vulnerable young people.

- 2.8 Review the Youth Offending service offer in line with our statutory obligations as it is expected that both partner and Reading Borough Council funding will reduce in the coming years.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1. As a result of a reduction in Government funding, Reading Borough Council estimates it now needs to save £51 million over the next three years. As part of a package of proposals to close this funding gap, the council has planned to reduce spend by £1.5 million from Reading Borough Councils Early Help service offer. Included in the savings proposal are some direct management action as well as altering aspects of our offer to local families, children and young people.
- 3.2. There is a statutory duty on Local Authorities, contained in Section 507B (inserted into the Education Act 1996 by section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) which states that 'Every Local Authority in England must, 'so far as reasonably practicable' secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to sufficient educational and leisure time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being.' Department of Education guidance in 2012 requires Local Authorities to be:
- Involving young people in decision making and governance where possible
  - Securing access to sufficient services, with particular reference to the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.
  - Determining the mix of open access, targeted, preventative and specialist provision needed to meet local needs.
  - Determining which services need public funding, based on agreed and clear priorities taking account of the fact that public funds need to primarily target young people at risk of poor outcomes.
  - Continue to publish a local offer for young people
- 3.3. Reading's Early Help Strategy (2013 - 2016), agreed by ACE committee in 2013 sets out the following strategic priorities:
- Intervening early before issues, needs and costs increase.
  - Targeting resources effectively, including increasing assertive outreach and follow-up support to the families that need it most
  - Meeting the needs of families with complex and multiple needs
  - To 'Think Family', ensuring we are being creative in meeting needs rather than delivering services.
  - Making it easier for families to access advice, information and support, building the capacity of communities and individuals to develop services and to support each other
- 3.4. An Early Help offer will continue to provide support to families in Reading, but this nneeds to be a partnership led model of delivery. In particular working and challenging partners to increase the voluntary sector, schools and health sector Early Help provision whilst Reading Borough Council moves to targeting its resources to meet vulnerable children's needs as a priority.
- 3.5. There are two key areas of strategy that are fundamental to the achievement of the vision:
- Ensuring that the Troubled Families agenda is delivered as it provides a golden thread for partnership working and specific focus on targeting families and reaching particular outcomes.

- Ensuring that there is specific focus on joint work with colleagues to strengthen the Early Help offer and looking for efficiencies where possible.

| 3.6. Reading Borough Council Early Help offer will therefore move to focus primarily –on preventative (but not solely) targeted and specialist service provision. Reading Borough Council services will need to compliment targeted/ specialist services provided or commissioned in Schools as well as Voluntary sector independently funded services.

#### 4. CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO YOUTH OFFER PROPOSALS

4.1. On the 2nd March 2016, ACE committee agreed to a public consultation on the range of proposals to alter the Youth offer to young people and families in Reading. These proposals are driven both by the need to re-organise our service offer to ensure that we are targeting our resources to meet the needs of the most vulnerable as well as contribute to the overall council budgetary savings targets.

4.2. The Education, Children’s Service and Early Help directorate organised a public consultation which ran from the 16<sup>th</sup> March to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Within this period there was an online tool to enable any community member to complete, which was widely advertised in local Libraries, Children’s centres, on social media and in the press. In addition to this the Youth services organised targeted consultation events in 5 local secondary schools, 12 youth clubs and with young people that they were working with. Finally a specific focus group session was organised for local voluntary sector youth organisations to enable free ranging discussion and feedback on the proposals.

4.3. Responses received were:

- 12 replies were received through the online tool.
- 414 young people (mainly 13 - 17 year olds) participated in the youth service events in a wide range of local schools and youth clubs.
- 9 voluntary sector youth services met with our service manager to discuss the proposals.

4.4. A full outline of the responses received from stakeholders is in the appendix.

4.5. Many young people fully engaged in the consultation process alongside the voluntary and faith sector. Whilst there were some mixed views expressed there were also some common views and themes with general agreement on most of the proposals.

4.6. The proposal to cease universal youth provision was not wholly welcomed, as this was the area that the majority of consultation responses disagreed with proposal. However it is important to note the cautious welcome by the Voluntary Sector on the proposal to collaborate more widely with this sector particularly with regard to the use of buildings.

4.7. The proposal to continue with the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ), Learning Difficulty & Disability (LDD) and Young Carers groups was broadly well received, although the proposal to stop support for under 13 year olds was questioned.

4.8. There was a similar positive response to the proposal to retain a focus on targeted and speciality youth support. It is worth noting the broad and general agreement on this from the range of people consulted. However both young people and in particular the Voluntary sector response raised concerns that the reduction in universal provision may result in some young people not being identified early enough to access the support they will need.

- 4.9. The Youth 'drop in' provision had a variety of responses with a range of views as to a town centre location and whether vulnerable young people would access it.
5. **READING BOROUGH COUNCIL RECOMMENDED FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY - YOUTH OFFER**
- 5.1. In light of the extensive and well used full range of local youth service provision in Reading, across uniform, faith and voluntary sector providers, RBC will provide a universal delivery of:
- a. PHSE sessions in all Secondary schools that Reading children attend on Positive Relationships & sexual health, CSE/ Your Safety and PREVENT.
  - b. Run the C Card scheme (a project to ensure young people can access condoms) and promote this in all open access sessions (RBC and non RBC) and targeted interventions.
  - c. RBC will continue to offer opportunities for all young people to participate in the democratic process.
- 5.2. RBC is retaining these specific areas of universal provision for clear reasons. Both the particular PHSE & the C Card scheme are key preventative interventions on key areas (CSE, Sexual Health, and radicalisation) of concern for the LSCB and RBC. Retaining the opportunity for young people to participate and influence the democratic process enables RBC to continue to hear the voice of young people into the senior leadership and political environment of the council.
- 5.3. The council does not have a statutory duty to provide universal services directly. Although it would not choose to remove these services it has taken the view that given the reduced resources available, targeted group and one to one support should be the priority for future spending in this area.
- 5.4. Based on a snap shot of youth service use in March 2016, RBC within the next 12 - 18 months would cease to provide 27 youth work sessions and street work which affected 368 young people per month. Importantly RBC will be working with local voluntary and faith sector providers to explore options of continuing as much of this provision within our buildings as possible. The council will pursue the option to discussing with Voluntary sector partners the option of utilising the current community buildings for them to delivery youth work sessions.
- 5.5. RBC will continue to ensure that information is made available on the wide range of services on offer through its Family Information service and youth website. Importantly this will need to be reviewed regularly for any gaps in provision are it for any age or targeted groups as well as within particular areas of Reading. Through this information we are confident the majority of families and many young people will be able to access the wide range of local provision to meet our sufficiency duty.
- 5.6. Importantly RBC will then prioritise the retained youth offer resource on meeting the needs and specific outcomes for vulnerable young people. The priority outcomes are confirmed as follows:
- To achieve the right life skills and to transition successfully to adulthood
  - To succeed in school and access training, education or work/ have aspiration and life skills so that young people are in education, employment or training
  - Young people to have good Mental Health, be confident and positive self-esteem
  - To be happy, safe and settled at home
  - To have friends, feel and be safe in their community and with their peers
- 5.7. In order to meet these needs and outcomes, RBC will therefore:

- Ensure that youth workers will continue to take case work from the Early Help pathway. One to one support as well as work in groups will continue to be used with these targeted young people. For example during holidays the youth service will be able to organise group activities for the open cases to engage, create positive activities and support them in meeting identified outcomes.
  - Use Youth Workers to complete return interviews for children and young people who go missing from home
  - Continue with the weekly LGBTQ session for local young people
  - Will continue with its respite care for young carers that over 13. Officers can assure councillors that the under 13 provision will also continue, but be supported from non-youth work resources.
  - Continue with its respite care for young people with LDD. Officers will review the number of sessions that it can resource due the concerns raised by young people.
  - Continue to support specific specialist drugs and alcohol, teenage pregnancy and youth offending services. However there is the need to now review the youth offending service offer as there is anticipated further reductions in spend expected from partner agencies as well as a reducing cohort of offending but with increasing more complex lives.
- 5.8. Following the mixed consultation responses regarding the proposal to create a 'Bridge' venue in town for vulnerable young people, officers on reviewing the evidence and feedback are concerned and have doubts about the effectiveness of this part of the youth offer. Therefore the council will review this proposal with corporate partners, colleagues from the voluntary sector and young people in more detail. The commitment is to complete a review in the autumn 2016 and return back to ACE committee in early 2017 with more detailed work to confirm the way forward in this area of enabling greater access for young people to support services.
- 5.9. With the Councils need to reduce expenditure across its services over the next three years, there is no change to the overall proposal to reduce £1.5million from the Early Help area. Officers have searched for alternative ways of savings money but no viable alternatives in the consultation process have been identified and so to save £750k from the range of youth offer areas continues to be the proposal.

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 6.1. This report and its content is an important contribution to these Local Authorities corporate priorities.
- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
  - Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;
- 6.2. The 2016-19 corporate plan notes that an Early Help Review will be completed to ensure the offer for children and young people will be targeted at need and 'joined up' as part of a whole system approach to delivering good outcomes for children and young people, that includes the embedding of a targeted youth offer that covers specific vulnerable Young people.
- 6.3. The decisions request here contributes to the Councils strategic aim to promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all by ensuring that public money is being targeted on achieving key outcomes for the most vulnerable in the town.

## **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 7.1. Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out

"any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

7.2. This report outlines our consultation process that was committed too in March 2016 ACE committee to meets our statutory consultation duty to involve the public.

## 8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2. Officers have updated the previously shared Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in the March 2016 ACE report.

8.3. Officer assessment is continues to be;

8.4. Currently the representation of BME groups within open access youth clubs is broadly in line with the general youth population in the localities. With the new proposals the number of universal youth groups delivered and/or commissioned by RBC will be reduced over an 12-18 month period until it will no longer fund any universal/open access youth clubs. However RBC would look for replacement service delivery from voluntary sector partners and explore providing access to key community spaces to deliver this replacement activity and offer advice and guidance on how to deliver a quality youth work session. The impact of proposed changes will be low on BME groups.

8.5. The number of universal youth groups delivered and/or commissioned by RBC will be reduced over an 18 month period until it will no longer fund any universal/open access youth clubs. However RBC would look for replacement service delivery from voluntary sector partners and explore providing access to key community spaces to deliver this replacement activity and offer advice and guidance on how to deliver a quality youth work session.

8.6. Currently the balance of male to female attendance at open access youth clubs is predominately male so there may be greater impact on males.

8.7. The groups of vulnerable young people whom it is proposed we will be focussing on include:

- Young people who go missing and are being exploited
- Teenage parents
- Young people that RBC is he corporate parent for
- Young people with escalating safeguarding needs
- Young people who are young carers
- Young people with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning

8.8. We will continue to be able to support males who meet the above criteria and it is also likely we will support more young women than previously. The impact of proposed changes will be low on Gender/transgender.

- 8.9. As part of the targeted work programme it is proposed to continue with the current weekly youth session for young people with Learning difficulties and Disabilities. It is also proposed to offer respite care sessions at least twice a month for young carers from 13 years old. The impact of proposed changes will be low on disability.
- 8.10. It is proposed to continue with the current weekly youth work offered to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning young people. The impact of proposed changes will be low on Sexual orientation.
- 8.11. Over a period of time it is proposed to eventually cease to provide universal youth groups. These groups are attended by 11-19 year olds. This has therefore a medium impact on age.
- 8.12. Universal youth clubs are accessible for all religious beliefs. We do not monitor the religion of service users. The impact of proposed changes is unknown on religion.

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Section 507B inserted into the Education Act 1996 by virtue of section six of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 will be commenced in January 2007 and applies to England only. It must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to:
  - a. Sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities; and
  - b. Sufficient recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities.
- 9.2. In order to assist young people to engage in positive activities, the local authority will need to provide a comprehensive, accurate and accessible information service for young people regarding existing local positive activity provision.
- 9.3. Currently Reading Borough Council meets this duty with the online directory, named the Reading Service Guide, with a specific youth section. <http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/youth.page?youthchannel=0>
- 9.4. There are a number of acts that apply to a youth offending service that the council must and does comply with.
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1989 Section 38 of the
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1989 Section 42(3)
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1989 Section 39(1)
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1989. Section 39(5)
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Sections 39(7) and 40 set out the broad functions of a Youth Offending Team
  - Criminal Justice Act 2003 s325
  - Children Act 2004 s10(4)
  - Children Act 2004 s 11
  - Children Act 2004 Section 13(3) (d)
  - Education and Skills Act (2008) s16/s77
  - Children and YP Act 1969 s23AA(5)
  - Children and YP Act 1969 s23(3)
  - Bail Act 1976 s 3 AA and 3AB
  - Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s66
  - Sentencing Act S18 and 29

- Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 s 25

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. When both financial years savings (of £750k) are taken out of the current overall spend our budget amount reduces to £1,319,500 of council spend on the youth offer. The figures below are therefore an outline of spend from the start of 17/18 with full effect of savings having been reached.

Universal Services	0	
Targeted Services	839,700	Still expecting to supplement RBC expenditure from these Income sources from Public Health, Short breaks and Young Carers grant
Intensive Services	479,800	Still expecting to supplement RBC expenditure from these Income sources from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCG, PCC &amp; YJB for Youth offending service</li> <li>• Public Health &amp; PCC for SOURCE &amp; Income</li> <li>• Public Health for Teenage parent services.</li> </ul>
Total	1,319,500	

10.2. Therefore our new estimate that RBC could spend in each of the three categories would be:

	17/18	With income
Universal Services	0%	0%
Targeted Services	64%	45%
Intensive Services	36%	55%

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. None used for this report.

## Appendix A

### Youth Offer Proposal - summary of views and responses

Young People's views	Public Views	VCS views	Summary	What are we going to do now?
<b>Universal Proposal - All open access youth clubs will close, but offer buildings free of charge to the community to run their own youth projects</b>				
<p>The majority disagreed with this, although it should be noted that a number of young people did not state an opinion, although many made comments.</p>	<p>The majority disagreed with this</p>	<p>Whilst supportive of the approach to work collaboratively on future provision, there was comment re removing resource which helped to minimise the impact of issues and challenges on young people. There was also caution re the use of RBC buildings due to previous attempts at this.</p>	<p>Whilst the majority disagreed with the proposal to not fund any open access youth clubs it should be noted whilst RBC will cease delivery of universal youth provision the mapping exercise noted the myriad of universal type provision on offer to young people within Reading.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that this is not a proposal that RBC wants to pursue, but the level of reductions required in expenditure means the closure of many non-statutory and universal is unavoidable.</p> <p>Close universal youth provision from April 2017, whilst exploring use of buildings with VCS partners.</p>
<b>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (LGBTQ) Proposal: RBC to continue to offer a weekly LGBTQ youth club.</b>				
<p>The majority agreed with this proposal as they felt it important to give support to this group of young people. There were some comments that it was unfair to continue to run this club if other universal groups closed. There also a suggestion that all young people of any sexuality should be able to access this club.</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal</p>	<p>The proposal to continue with this provision was welcomed, although it was questioned why RBC would deliver this when it could be commissioned and delivered by the VCS.</p>	<p>Little opposition to this proposal, although comment that it could be commissioned and delivered by a VCS partner.</p>	<p>Continue to offer a LGBTQ weekly youth session</p>

Young People's views	Public Views	VCS views	Summary	What are we going to do now?
<b>Respite Proposal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LDD - Reduce these sessions to weekly (rather than twice weekly) and review the weekend respite care.</li> <li>• Young Carers - Reduce these sessions to once a month rather than twice a month.</li> </ul>				
<p>The majority of young people disagreed with reducing these sessions and felt that it was important to support these young people. However some young people challenged why this group should receive support if other groups were being closed. It was also suggested that these young people could be integrated into mainstream groups.</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal although some respondents requested reassurance about the U13 age group continuing as well.</p>	<p>The proposal to continue this proposal was welcomed, although as above it was queried why the VCS could not be commissioned to deliver this project.</p>	<p>The majority agreed that this group of young people should be supported. It was queried whether the VCS could be commissioned to deliver this.</p>	<p>Continue with respite care for young carers over 13 years old. It should be noted that under 13's provision will continue, but be supported from non-youth work resources.</p>
<b>Looked After Children proposal: Provide LAC from 13 years upwards with a volunteer or allocated worker as a mentor - to support the young people into accessing community provision.</b>				
<p>A significant number of young people agreed with this proposal. Some questioned why LAC under 13 years would not receive similar support. The small number that disagreed with this proposal stated that this form of support should be available to everyone.</p>	<p>No clear picture of a response</p>	<p>This proposal was welcomed and commented that the VCS would welcome the opportunity to work with Children's Social Care to identify appropriate local provision for LAC</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal. Some queries why LAC under 13's would not receive similar support.</p>	<p>LAC - no mention within future service delivery section in ACE report Continue with the proposal?</p>
<b>Targeted Youth Support Proposal:</b>				

Young People's views	Public Views	VCS views	Summary	What are we going to do now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with targeted supported through the early help pathway and to offer young people engaged in targeted work the opportunity to be involved in holiday activities.</li> <li>• The youth service will continue to provide return interviews for young people that go missing.</li> </ul>				
<p>A large majority agreed with this proposal. Common themes from the responses were that young people would benefit from this targeted support to help them with serious issues. There were some comments that holiday activities should be open to all young people</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal although references were made again to the reduction in universal provision and impact this may have on many young people.</p>	<p>No specific comments re this proposal</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal, with some comments which referred to reduction in universal provision and that support should be available to all young people.</p>	<p>Continue with the proposal to deliver targeted support to young people via the early help pathway and to offer holiday activities to those engaged in targeted support.</p>
<p><b>Specialist Youth Service Proposal: To continue with this specialist provision (Youth Offending Service, SOURCE - drug and alcohol service and Teenage Pregnancy Team) and to offer help for young people with mental health issues.</b></p>				
<p>Majority of young people agreed with this proposal, particularly the importance of supporting those with mental health issues. Re support around drug and alcohol issues, some young people felt that it was important, whilst others felt that as it was their own choice they should not get support. There were also some concerns expressed that some young people that need specialist support</p>	<p>Split opinion with half agreeing with the proposal and half not agreeing with it.</p>	<p>Comment that there was little recognition of the potential partnership opportunities with the VCS in this area.</p>	<p>The majority agreed with this proposal with a reference from the VCS that there may be partnership opportunities with the VCS in this area.</p>	<p>Continue with the proposal. Although there is now the need to review the Youth Offending Service offer as there is anticipated further reductions in spend expected from partner agencies as well as a reducing cohort of offending, but with increasingly more complex lives.</p>

Young People's views	Public Views	VCS views	Summary	What are we going to do now?
may be missed and that everyone should have access to this support				
<b>Youth Drop In Provision Proposal: Possibility of a Youth Drop-in provision in Town Centre, open between 4.00 pm and 8.00 pm during the week and 10.00 - 2.00 pm on a Saturday, offering help, guidance and support</b>				
The majority of young people did not make a comment on this proposal. However there was some agreement with it. Comments made were mixed, with some agreeing on a town centre hub whilst others arguing that it was not within their communities. There were also comments on having a space where young people could talk to someone when issues arose.	Mainly in favour, although some concerns about the negative potential of such a venue and whether it would be accessible for all vulnerable young people	This proposal was generally welcomed, although concerns were raised over whether the 'target market' of young people would be able/willing to travel to the town Centre for this support. It was recognised that a central provision could work if the offer was right, although it could end up as a universal provision by default (if universal provision not available in the localities. It was also recognised that a town centre provision should prevent any 'turf' issues which could arise if the provision was located in an outlying area.	Mixed responses to this proposal particularly in relation to the location of the support provision.	'Pause' the proposal to develop a Youth 'drop in' provision in town for vulnerable young people.
<b>Any other groups of young people that should be considered?</b>				
Mental health and all young people	Majority thought no	No comments		
<b>Any other outcomes we should add (apart from the ones named in the consultation document)</b>				
Confidence and self esteem	No additional outcomes added	No comments		
<b>Any other ways the Youth Service could save money?</b>				
Young people made suggestions on how to	2 x respondents indicated that RBC			

Young People's views	Public Views	VCS views	Summary	What are we going to do now?
<p>generate money e.g. charging to enter youth clubs and renting buildings out</p>	<p>should look elsewhere to cut e.g. sports provision, verge cutting and less agency or consultants. One respondent suggested a 'virtual' youth support service e.g. email, text, call, chat service</p>			

Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed

Directorate: Children, Education & Early Help Services

Service: Children's Action Team/Youth Services

Name and job title of person doing the assessment

Name: Gina Carpenter

Job Title: Service Manager, Early Help

Date of assessment: June 2016

Scope your proposal

**What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?**

There is a statutory duty on Local Authorities to secure access to sufficient positive educational and recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and sufficient facilities for such activities. It will be for each Local Authority to decide what constitutes 'sufficient' taking into account the needs of young people in its area.

This is contained in Section 507B (inserted into the Education Act 1996 by section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Over the last 4 months RBC has undertaken a review of the offer to Reading's young people. The proposal aims to

- Reduce RBC spend on youth services by £750k to bring it in line with statistical neighbour spend. This will include a reduction in staffing.
- Taper off RBC's universal youth service to a minimum offer within 12-18 months and begin to explore with partners the potential of our assets being used to deliver universal youth work by alternative providers
- Explore the option of creating a 'bridge' venue for vulnerable young people to use as a drop in site to access support if they are unable to receive that support
- Reduce, but focus the target youth offer in line with statistical neighbours
- continue to offer respite care for both young carers and LDD young people and to continue to offer a LGBTQ weekly youth session.
- refocus the LAC youth offer to be on enabling these young people to access the community youth services like any other young person in Reading.
- Continue to spend the same money in the Youth Offending service but manage any partner contributions with the service itself.

**Who will benefit from this proposal and how?**

The proposed consultation seeks to ensure that staff, service users and partner organisations are provided the opportunity to inform the review process so that the decisions around making changes to the youth offer would be based on assessment of need and the availability of alternative provision.

**What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?**

The review of the youth offer has been designed with the aim of

- focussing on targeting and aiming service delivery at individuals and families who require more intensive/crisis intervention from statutory resources and thus higher cost services.

- increasing profile and impact of particular issues, namely child exploitation, children going missing, homelessness and NEETs in Reading.

- ability to clearly communicate and explain the youth offer for young people, families, the wider community, staff and partners.

- Contribution to saving targets for the directorate.

**Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**

Young people - access to activities and support when required in order that they can be in education, employment or training, be healthy (both mentally and physically), be safe (both within the home and in the community)

Staff - to support young people so that their outcomes are improved.

Partner organisations - Ability to know and understand what other youth provision there is in Reading. At times support in delivering a good quality youth work session.

**Assess whether an EqIA is Relevant**

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.)

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, and feedback.

Yes (delete as appropriate)

If the answer is Yes to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment. If No you **MUST** complete this statement

An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:

Signed (completing officer)

Date

Signed (Lead Officer)

Date

**Assess the Impact of the Proposal**

Your assessment must include:

- Consultation
- Collection and Assessment of Data
- Judgement about whether the impact is negative or positive

Think about who does and doesn't use the service? Is the take up representative of the community? What do different minority groups think? (You might think your policy, project or service is accessible and addressing the needs of these groups, but asking them might give you a totally different view). Does it really meet their varied needs? Are some groups less likely to get a good service?

How do your proposals relate to other services - will your proposals have knock on effects on other services elsewhere? Are there proposals being made for other services that relate to yours and could lead to a cumulative impact?

**Example:** A local authority takes separate decisions to limit the eligibility criteria for community care services; increase charges for respite services; scale back its accessible housing programme; and cut concessionary travel.

Each separate decision may have a significant effect on the lives of disabled residents, and the cumulative impact of these decisions may be considerable.

This combined impact would not be apparent if decisions are considered in isolation.

Consultation

How have you consulted with or do you plan to consult with relevant groups and experts. If you haven't already completed a Consultation form do it now. The checklist helps you make sure you follow good consultation practice.

[My Home > Info Pods > Community Involvement Pod - Inside Reading Borough Council](#)

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained	Date when contacted
Over the last 4 months a number of tasks were completed in order to inform the youth offer consultation		
Staff	<p>A small group of Staff were identified to participate in facilitated discussions to explore questions around what outcomes were needed from a youth offer and the priorities going forward. These discussions have informed the initial proposal.</p> <p>Staff will also be invited to contribute towards the public consultation.</p> <p>Further consultation with staff will follow after the proposal has been finalised and a delivery model agreed upon.</p>	Sept/Oct
Service Users - Young people	<p>Youth Workers worked with a wide range of young people from the variety of services RBC already provides. Young people were asked to consider the key outcomes that are important for themselves and their peers.</p> <p>They were also asked to comment on the priority areas for help and support they would like.</p> <p>Young people will also have the opportunity to comment on the proposal within the public consultation.</p>	

## Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

As the proposal is still in its infancy in terms of structure of delivery and thus which staff will be impacted in the future it will be necessary to undertake another Equality Impact Assessment once this is known to ascertain whether the proposal impacts on certain groups

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Racial groups**

Universal youth groups delivered and/or commissioned by RBC will gradually reduce over an 18 month period until it will no longer fund any universal/open access youth clubs. However RBC would look for replacement service delivery from voluntary sector partners and explore providing access to key community spaces to deliver this replacement activity and offer advice and guidance on how to deliver a quality youth work session. The representation of BME groups within open access youth clubs is broadly in line with the general youth population in the localities.

**Is there a negative impact?** No

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/transgender (cover pregnancy and maternity, marriage)**

Universal youth groups delivered and/or commissioned by RBC will gradually reduce over an 18 month period until it will no longer fund any universal/open access youth clubs. However RBC would look for replacement service delivery from voluntary sector partners and explore providing access to key community spaces to deliver this replacement activity and offer advice and guidance on how to deliver a quality youth work session.

*The balance of male to female attendance at open access youth clubs is predominately male so there may be greater impact on males. (Need to check figures - think this is still the case - but need to check)*

**Is there a negative impact?** Not sure

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability**

It is proposed to continue with the weekly youth session for young people with Learning difficulties and Disabilities. It is also proposed to offer respite care sessions at least twice a month for young carers from 13 years old.

**Is there a negative impact?** No

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)**

It is proposed to continue with the weekly youth work offered to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning young people.

**Is there a negative impact?** No

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Age**

Over a period of time it is proposed to eventually stop the RBC delivery and commissioning of universal youth groups. These groups are attended by 11-19 year olds.

**Is there a negative impact?** Yes

### **Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief?**

Universal youth clubs are accessible for all religious beliefs. We do not monitor the religion of service users.

**Is there a negative impact?** No

### Make a Decision

If the impact is negative then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you MUST assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

Tick which applies (Please delete relevant ticks)

1. **No negative impact identified**            Go to sign off
2. **Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason**

You must give due regard or weight but this does not necessarily mean that the equality duty overrides other clearly conflicting statutory duties that you must comply with.

**Reason**

Whilst RBC will not deliver or commission universal youth groups in the long term it was identified during a review of the existing offer of youth provision within the town that there were over 200 provisions that were available to young people cutting across a variety of topics and activities. Around two thirds of this provision was labelled as universal which suggests that universal services are well catered for across the board.

3. **Negative impact identified or uncertain**

**What action will you take to eliminate or reduce the impact? Set out your actions and timescale?**

Within 18 - 24 months RBC delivery and commissioned youth groups will reduce and eventually cease. However as identified above there are significant numbers of alternative universal provision across the town which young people can access if desired.

The RBC youth offer will be for 13- 18 year olds (and up to 25 years for Looked After Children and those with learning difficulties or disabilities) who are identified through the Early Help pathway and step down cases from Children's Social Care. RBC will offer 1:1 support from an allocated worker. The key needs that these young people have are:

Poor behaviour and participation in education

Not in education, employment or training

Worsening mental health, including managing low mood and anxiety

Taking more and more risk in their

- Use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Anti-social behaviour in community
- Criminal behaviour
- Sexual activity

Go missing from home

At risk or exposed to sexual exploitation and domestic abuse

At risk or exposure to homelessness due to conflict at home

For targeted groups of young people the service will be able to offer support at school, in their homes or in safe locations

**How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?**

The CATS monitor quarterly the gender and racial breakdown of those families and young people it supports.

Signed (completing officer)	Gina Carpenter	Date	19.6.16
Signed (Lead Officer)	Andy Fitton	Date	22.6.16