

Willenhall North, Willenhall South and Short Heath Area Panel
Consultation on changes to Targeted Youth Work
8th October 2015

1 Introduction

1.1 As part of the 2015-2016 budget setting process Cabinet agreed, on 4th February, to a reduction of £1.07m in the Targeted Youth Work budget for the two year period 2015-17, reducing it from £1.96 million to £888,000. This was subsequently approved by Full Council.

1.2 It was also reported to Cabinet that 40% of the remaining budget of £888,000 (i.e. £355,000) would be allocated to council delivery and 60% (i.e. £533,000) would be allocated for independent commissioned services. (the figure for commissioned services is in line with the second year of the current 3 year commissioning arrangements which conclude on 31st March 2016).

1.3 A review of targeted youth work took place in January which has led to reports being prepared for Cabinet meetings in March, June and July, all of which were subsequently withdrawn.

1.4 A report is being prepared for October Cabinet which reflects on the review of Targeted Youth Work allied to the budget reduction and sets out:

- an increased role for independent commissioned providers
- a new, significantly reduced, configuration for direct Council delivery, prioritising particular agendas including the reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour, support for community cohesion, targeted and vulnerable groups and capacity building

and would result, by 1st April 2016, in:

- ceasing delivery of Council services from all centres other than Myplace
- a major reduction in the number of full-time and part-time staff employed by the Council (reduction of 24.8 FTE posts and up to 54 staff).

1.4 The October Cabinet meeting will also consider:

- The Resource/Funding Allocation Model for which there are 3 options for determining the allocation of funding to different parts of Walsall (Appendix A)
- A new localised decision-making arrangement for which there are two options (see section 3 below).

2 Consultation process

2.1 A consultation process was implemented following Cabinet on 18th March. It ran from 19th March to 26th May and focussed upon the outcomes of the review and the proposals previously reported to Cabinet. The consultation invited responses to the following key areas:

- use/value of centre based provision;
- use/value of mobile delivery of youth services;
- the proportions of independent commissioned sector and Council delivered provision;
- priority groups and areas; and
- the proposed focus of Council resources on anti-social behaviour and community cohesion, in areas of high deprivation.

2.2 The consultation, conducted through face-to-face meetings and questionnaires, set out to:

- engage as wide a range of young people, especially from protected groups, as possible, including –
 - Young people attending all Council youth centres, during regular sessions of youth provision (this includes Aldridge Manor House, Allen's Centre Blackwood, Darlaston, Mossley, Myplace, Pelsall, Proffitt Street, Rosehill, St Giles)
 - Young people attending independent commissioned providers' centres; and
 - Young people who attend specific groups:
 - Youth Support Service Reference Group;
 - Safeguarding Involvement Team;
 - Council 4 Kids;
 - Youth of Walsall;
 - Young Carers; and
 - Young people with learning difficulties.
- ensure a broad spectrum of partners and stakeholders are invited to contribute:
 - Partners were contacted through area partnership meetings which took place during May 2015 and included representatives from:
 - Police;
 - Health;
 - Walsall Housing Group/Walsall Association of Tenant Management Organisations/other social housing providers
 - National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
 - Community representatives;
 - Social Care, Environmental Health Anti Social Behaviour Team, Victim Support;

- Fire Service, Town Centre Manager, Specialist services; and
- independent commissioned providers (who were consulted at their monthly meeting).

- Secondary and Special schools who were invited to attend a special meeting (no-one attended);
- The general public were made aware through libraries and community venues;
- Wider independent commissioned sector organisations were able to respond through questionnaires made available through Walsall Voluntary Action
- Ward Councillors were invited to contribute.

2.3 The change in political leadership and appointment of a new Portfolio Holder, Councillor Towe, Portfolio Holder for Learning, Skills and Apprenticeship, led to a review of the proposals contained within the draft cabinet paper. As a result, a further consultation was commenced in August to consider specifically the decision making process and resource allocation model for commissioned services. Although originally decided to close the consultation on 27th September so that responses could be included in the Cabinet paper at an early stage, it has now been extended to the 8th October.

2.4 It was decided that this should be focussed on:

- the most affected groups of young people
- commissioned providers and community associations
- Area Managers and their partnership colleagues
- Stakeholders – Police, NHS, Public Health, Housing, Schools, Children’s Services and other elements of the Council.

2.5 Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has established a Task and Finish Group to look at and comment on the proposals. At the Scrutiny Committee’s meeting on 8 September, it was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that:

- That Area Partnerships are consulted during November, 2015 to identify which of the two commissioning decision making processes they would wish to implement in their areas;
- That Cabinet be advised that the Working Group recommend that option B of the resource allocation model (described at 3.2.2 below, distribution £267k by Ward (50%) / £266k (50%) by youth population and need (30% by youth population and 70% by need) be adopted;

3. The Proposals under consideration

3.1 How funding can be spent at a local level to ensure that ‘need’ is addressed whilst allowing flexibility to direct support which is best suited to each locality

- 3.1.1 The current allocation of resources to commissioned providers uses a resource allocation model based on deprivation indicators. A range of proposals have been developed for successive Cabinet reports which have built in other factors such as the size of the youth population. The current set of proposals incorporate a varying proportion of the funds to each ward.
- 3.1.2 The outcomes of the review of TYW concluded that services which remained after the budget reductions should be targeted at vulnerable young people across the borough, while seeking to ensure that **all** young people had potential access to youth work. The Director of Children’s Services, Lead Member for Children’s Services and 2006 Act Duty have a duty to address the needs of all children and young people including the “most disadvantaged and vulnerable”. (Department for Education Statutory Guidance 2013.)
- 3.1.3 The commissioning process has been managed by YSS on a borough wide basis, approved by Procurement and Legal colleagues. It is based on a specification developed against identified needs, which led to a 3 year contract (the current round ends end March 2016, with opportunities to vary volumes, activities and funding on an annual basis and supported by a robust contract management arrangement. Proposals now being considered, if approved, would make changes to both the decision-making process and model for allocating resources.

3.2 Resource Allocation Models

- 3.2.1 Following discussions with the Portfolio Holder, 3 options were developed. All of the 3 options below contain a level (differentiated between each option) of weighting based on need (as distinct from deprivation as previously) assessed against the levels of teenage conception, youth crime, incidences of youth related anti-social behaviour and numbers of young people not in education, employment or training.
- 3.2.2 The resource allocation model options include:

	Distributed by Ward	Distribution by youth population and need	
		Distributed by youth population (9-19)	Distributed by need factors
Option A	75%	12.5%	12.5%
Option B	50%	15%	35%
Option C	20%	24%	56%

The effects of each of these options on the distribution of resources is reflected in the table attached in Appendix A.

The potential risks and benefits of each of the options is analysed below:

Option	Potential Risks	Potential Benefits
Option A - Distribution by ward 75% and by need and youth population (9-19) 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced ability to respond to variations in identified demand or need • Some provision spread thinly • Possible adverse reaction to allocation changes in particular in two of the Area Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises some levels of need and demand • Supports geographical coverage across Walsall • Ensures a ward focus • Supports local and ward decision-making processes
Option B - Distribution by ward 50% and 50% by youth population and need (30% youth population, 70% by need)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible adverse reaction to changes in resource allocation across 6 areas • May mitigate against geographical spread of delivery • A reduced ward focus for delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater impact on corporate priorities, particularly as regards vulnerable groups • Transparent formula takes account of both volume demand, need and geographical spread
Option C - Distribution by ward 20% and 80% by youth population and need (30% youth population, 70% by need)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May mitigate against geographical spread of delivery • A reduced ward focus for delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater impact on corporate priorities, particularly as regards vulnerable groups • Reduces degree of variation from current allocations in all bar 1 partnership area • Improved balance of resource across the borough in response to need

3.3 Commissioning Decision making process

The commissioning process has involved a borough-wide stakeholder panel decision making process. Proposals now being considered, if approved would make changes to this model.

3.3.1 Option 1 – Locally Shaped and Corporately Commissioned

This would strengthen the localisation of the process with the Youth Support Services working with Area Partnership colleagues to establish 6 area based commissioning groups, drawing on the experience and expertise of local partners, providers and young people as key decision makers. This option would include:

- a 'core' Walsall specification with clear outcomes
- a unique additional element of the specification for each area partnership, informed by the area profile priorities and local partners. Respondents would need to demonstrate:
 - an understanding of the wards in the particular partnership area based on the area profile
 - an understanding of the needs of young people and the community in that area
 - evidence of the ability to respond and succeed in responding to these identified needs.
- 6 separate but 'joined-up' partnership partner-led commissioning groups, with young people integral as decision makers
- Youth Support Service, alongside corporate procurement, leading the single, joined-up process (with 6 constituent elements), including overall oversight of contract management, reporting, payments, quality assurance and support etc.

3.3.2 This option has the benefits of:

- Mitigating the risk of not adhering to corporate processes
- Consistent decision making
- Efficient and effective contract management and quality assurance
- Borough-wide coherence – with a bespoke youth work offer in each area partnership
- Consistent approach to contracting and securing of value for money.

We will review the effectiveness of the agreed commissioning arrangements within 6 months of the awarding of contracts. This is by the end of September 2016.

3.3.3 Option 2 – Budgets & Decision-making delegated to the Councillor Area Panels (Committees)

This proposal would see a delegation of Executive powers to the Area Panels and as such it amount to a variation of the role, remit and powers of a Full Council Committee and would require a variation to the Council's Scheme of Delegations and full Council approval.

3.3.4 Youth Support Services, working alongside Area Partnerships would make recommendations upon the services commissioned under the allocated

budget for the delivery of targeted youth work. It is proposed that this option would include:

- a 'core' Walsall specification with clearly defined outcomes
- a unique additional specification element for each area partnership, informed by the area profile priorities and local partners. Respondents would need to demonstrate:
 - an understanding of the wards in the particular partnership area based on the area profile
 - an understanding of the needs of young people and the community in that area
 - evidence of the ability to respond and succeed in responding to these identified needs
- 6 separate decision making bodies, the Area Partnership Panels
- Youth Support Service working alongside Area Partnership Managers would ensure oversight of contract management, reporting, payments, quality assurance and support whilst engaging with the Area partnership over the duration of the services.

3.3.5 This option has the benefits of:

- Responding to the localism agenda
- Localised decision making
- Area partnership has a bespoke youth work offer, complimentary to the Council delivered services.

3.4 Both options respond to the localism agenda, and provide for local decision making. However both have the risk of increasing administrative and other costs, by using six local processes rather than one borough wide process, and variations in decision-making which could lead to challenge.

3.5 Further work would need to be undertaken to consider how best to mitigate the potential risk in option 2 of any reduction in strategic oversight.

3.6 Advice from procurement colleagues indicates that there would be factors to be taken into account in considering 'delegating' funds to area partnerships. Consideration is required regarding how such arrangements would be managed from a procurement and contracting perspective.

3.7 Both proposals would benefit from exploring how social value can be addressed at the point of tender in order to ensure a focus on local need within the local area. It is important to factor such things in at the point of design (hence the suggestion of 6 area commissioning groups) and also to provide some high level information in the Cabinet report given the public interest that such issues usually generate.

Recommendation

Panel members are invited to:

- note the contents of the report
- respond to the consultation

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Appendix A **Resource Allocation Model options:**

Area Partnership	Option A Distribution £400,000 by Ward (75%) / £133K (25%) by need and youth population (50% by Youth population and 50% by need)	Option B Distribution £267k by Ward (50%) / £266k (50%) by youth population and need (30% by youth population and 70% by need)	Option C Distribution £107k by Ward (20%) / £426k (80%) by youth population and need (30% by youth population and 70% by need)
1: Brownhills / Pelsall / Rushall / Shelfield Wards	14.43% (£60,000 + £16,909)	13.86%	13.17%
Total Allocation	£76,909	£73,868	£70,209
Average £ spent per youth population (3080 9-19 year olds across 3 wards)	£24.97	£23.98	£22.80
2: Aldridge North & Walsall Wood / Aldridge South / Pheasey Park Farm / Streetly Wards	18.44% (£80,000 + £18,270)	16.87%	14.99%
Total Allocation	£98,270	£89,940	£79,919
Average £ spent per youth population (4467 9-19 year olds across 4 wards)	£22.00	£20.13	£17.89
3: Bloxwich East / Bloxwich West / Blakenall / Birchills – Leamore Wards	21.72% (£80,000 + £35,767)	23.44%	25.51%
Total Allocation	£115,767	£124,933	£135,961
Average £ spent per youth population (5048 9-19 year olds across 4 wards)	£22.93	£24.75	£26.93
4: Paddock / Palfrey / Pleck / St. Matthew's Wards	20.21% (£80,000 + £27,739)	20.43%	20.68%
Total Allocation	£107,739	£108,879	£110,248
Average £ spent per youth population (5829 9-19 year olds across 4 wards)	£18.48	£18.68	£18.91
5: Bentley and Darlaston North & Darlaston South Wards	10.37% (£40,000 + £15,265)	10.74%	11.18%
Total Allocation	£55,265	£57,230	£59,594
Average £ spent per youth population (2696 9-19 year olds across 2 wards)	£20.50	£21.23	£22.10
6: Short Heath / Willenhall North & Willenhall South Wards	14.83% (£60,000 + £19,051)	14.66%	14.46%
Total Allocation	£79,051	£78,152	£77,070
Average £ spent per youth population (3443 9-19 year olds over 3 wards)	£22.96	£22.70	£22.38

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