

**From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central Division**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills**

**Question (19-23)**

What more should be done to develop partnerships with statutory and voluntary organisations to deliver effective youth work for our young people in Wiltshire?

**Response**

In Wiltshire, we are committed to ensuring that children, young people and families thrive. Working with voluntary and statutory sector partners to deliver effective youth work is key to achieving this. We have in place a Voluntary Sector Forum to support and work with community organisations to deliver youth work and support to young people. The role of local area boards is also fundamental to this as they provide a conduit for discussion, strategy and funding to support innovation as well as to sustain those activities which are having a positive impact in the community.

Our FACT (Families and Children's Transformation) programme is also key as it is committed to bringing stronger and more clearly coordinated support to community activity. This will be formally developed through the creation of a Partnership Strategy. Building lasting success through the FACT partnership will deliver real change on the ground.

Supporting adolescents at risk is a priority for existing services and for FACT, including;

- Established Youth Offending Team
- Emerald Team (working with children missing and victims of child sexual exploitation)
- No Wrong Door development (working with young people on the edge of care)
- Implementation of Contextual Safeguarding (an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families).

To compliment the transformation work through FACT, we have several other areas of work to improve outcomes for young people:

- The Local Area Coordinators and Community Engagement Managers are involved in developing and supporting programmes for adolescents
- The Council commissions short breaks and youth work activities for children with SEND in partnership with the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council and has increased its investment for 2019-20
- Young people's voices are listened to and acted upon through a number of approaches supported by Wiltshire Council including:
  - the Young People Union
  - The "You said, we did" survey which is completed annually

- The Wiltshire Children and Young People's Health and Well Being Survey carried out in schools.

In order to deliver effective youth work, we need to continue and build upon the excellent work I have outlined. We also need to make the most of opportunities available to us, such as working with local businesses and employers to support, train and upskill young people and young adults. The Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Board is an important partnership in improving transitions and skills for young people. We will also need to ensure Local Area Boards continue to have a strong focus on the most vulnerable and encourage community participation for all age groups.