

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**13 September 2011**

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**Subject: 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy**

**Cabinet member: Lionel Grundy – Children’s Services**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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#### **Executive Summary**

The report outlines the background and context for producing an 11 to 19 commissioning strategy. It summarises the content of the strategy highlighting the commissioning priorities. The priorities include plans for further development of the Integrated Youth Service including the future Wiltshire Youth Work Offer. Finally, the report outlines savings which will be made from 1 April 2012 from the Council’s budget for youth work services.

#### **Proposal**

That Cabinet agrees the strategic direction and priorities outlined in the 11 to 19 commissioning strategy (see Appendix 1) including agreeing the following:

1. The commissioning priorities outlined in section 6 of the strategy and highlighted in section 15 of this report;
2. the Wiltshire Youth Work Offer for young people aged 13 to 19 also outlined in section 6 of the strategy and sections 22 and 23 of this report and
3. the savings from youth work services budgets outlined in section 24 of this report.

#### **Reason for Proposal**

The Wiltshire Children and Young People’s Trust brings together all agencies working with children and young people in Wiltshire. The Trust has developed a commissioning strategy covering services for the 11 to 19 age range. The strategy sets out the strategic direction for services for this age range including services purchased and provided by Wiltshire Council. Wiltshire Council Cabinet is being asked to endorse and approve the strategy including the commissioning priorities.

The 11 to 19 strategy includes plans for reshaping youth services in Wiltshire and for making the savings from the transformation of youth work services noted in the Council’s Financial Plan for 2011 to 2015.

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**Carolyn Godfrey**  
**Corporate Director – Children and Education**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

1. This report introduces the revised 11 to 19 commissioning strategy following a period of consultation and highlights key proposals where the Wiltshire Children and Young People’s Trust is seeking endorsement or approval from the Wiltshire Cabinet.
2. The strategy and this report also outline the strategic direction for re-shaping youth services in Wiltshire and for making savings from current expenditure on youth work provided by the Council’s Youth Development Service.

#### **Definitions**

The 11 to 19 commissioning strategy and this report are using the following definitions:

3. “**Services**” is used as a generic reference to all services for 11 to 19 years olds including education, health, social care and youth services.
4. “**Youth services**” refers to services which young people use in their free time, for example, sports clubs, guides, and scouts. Within Wiltshire the majority of youth services are provided by the voluntary and community sector and sports/activities clubs.
5. “**Youth work**” describes a particular youth service approach which is planned, has a clear purpose and offers young people developmental opportunities. The Wiltshire Council Youth Development Service takes a youth work approach as do a number of agencies providing services in Wiltshire.

#### **Developing the 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy**

6. The Wiltshire Children and Young People’s Trust brings together all agencies working with children and young people in Wiltshire. The Trust Commissioning Executive made a decision to develop a 13 to 19 commissioning strategy in July 2010. This was endorsed by the 13-19 Strategy Group in November 2010.
7. In December 2010 a multi-agency Youth Strategy Group was established with a specific brief to make plans for the future of youth services.

Wiltshire Assembly of Youth (WAY) was represented on the group. It was agreed that the work on youth services would be undertaken as part of the development of the commissioning strategy.

8. Three consultation events were held in February and March 2011, including events for young people and for staff from a wide range of agencies. Feedback from these events informed the draft strategy issued in May 2011.
9. Formal consultation on the draft took place from 13<sup>th</sup> May to 5<sup>th</sup> August. A summary of involvement in the consultation process is provided below:
  - 746 young people were involved. 598 young people took part in Focus Groups and 148 responded to a Snap Survey.
  - A total of 227 staff who provide services for young people took part in 6 events.
  - The draft commissioning strategy was an agenda item for Area Boards.
  - The Children's Services Committee submitted a response to the consultation. The Committee also established a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise, meeting on 9 September to a) consider the consultation process followed and b) consider the strategy and make any recommendations to Cabinet, details of which will be presented to Cabinet.
  - 31 written responses to the consultation were received.

### **Summary of the 11 to 19 commissioning strategy**

The 11 to 19 commissioning strategy includes the following:

10. **Section 1** is the **Executive Summary**. This notes that:

“Through the 11 to 19 commissioning strategy the Children's Trust will add value by ensuring:

- A coherent offer to young people.
- No overlap and duplication.
- Everyone is focusing on the most important priorities.
- The best use of the resources available.”

11. **Section 2** provides an **introduction** outlining the purpose, scope, links with existing strategies and how the strategy was developed. In response to consultation feedback the age range of the strategy has been changed from 13 to 19 to 11 to 19. However, it is important to note that some services and policy initiatives will focus on a narrower age range.

The introduction states that “The purpose of the commissioning strategy is to achieve better outcomes for young people aged 11-19 by:

- Ensuring a comprehensive range of high quality services for all young people.
- Providing an early response when young people are vulnerable or at risk, as soon as problems or issues arise.
- Ensuring cost effective services by improved co-ordination and reducing any overlaps and duplication.”

12. **Section 3** outlines the **national and local context** including the vision for services for 11 to 19 year olds and the values which will underpin all services. The Council's four year Business Plan notes the following intentions:
- Our biggest shift will be developing our work with communities to make them more self sufficient and less reliant on our services.
  - Plans to realign resources to “protect our most vulnerable citizens by investing in their services”.
13. **Section 4** provides **information on needs and performance** including key demographic data and an analysis of performance. The strategy aims for top 25% performance in all key performance indicators, including educational attainment.
14. **Section 5** is a **service review** which includes a framework for describing and categorising services. The framework is set out below:
- Universal or open access services available for all young people.
  - Lower level targeted support which if provided on a short term basis at an early stage will tackle problems before they become entrenched and difficult to change.
  - Higher level targeted support which needs to be available if young people are engaging in risky behaviour which might do them some harm in the longer term. Services at this level can prevent a drift into crime, serious substance misuse, self harming behaviour or the need to become “looked after”.
  - Specialist services where young people are at risk of significant harm or in need of very specific types of services.

The commissioning priorities outlined below, including the proposals for youth work services in Wiltshire, reflect the need to have an appropriate balance of different levels of service.

15. **Section 6** outlines the broad strategic **commissioning priorities**. These are:
- Supporting young people to move into employment and training.
  - Improving educational attainment.
- (These were the top 2 commissioning priorities selected by young people)
- Increasing the availability of affordable housing.
  - Exploring options to improve transport for young people.
  - Increasing the involvement of young people in the commissioning process.
  - Encouraging and increasing volunteering opportunities for young people.
  - Improving integrated youth services including:
    - Ensuring there is a focus on services for young people engaged in risky behaviour
    - Establishing the future of information, advice and guidance support.
    - Reshaping youth work services.

## Reshaping Youth Work Services

### Consultation on 4 Youth Work Suggestions

16. The draft commissioning strategy outlined 4 suggestions for reshaping the Youth Development Service and making the savings outlined in the Council's Business Plan. Reports on the consultation process include detailed responses. In summary:
17. Suggestion 1 considered **testing the market for Youth Work Services**. Overall this was not popular although just under a quarter of responses to the young people's Snap Survey favoured this option. Most of the concerns were about possible reductions in quality and concerns over who might provide the service.
18. Suggestion 2 focused on **developing local partnerships** with the voluntary sector or secondary schools and colleges. The voluntary sector felt that there would be benefits from forging stronger partnerships and that there was untapped potential in the local voluntary sector. Others also echoed this and felt there could be added value from closer partnership working. Concerns were expressed about using schools as a venue as some young people would prefer not to use school premises.
19. Suggestion 3 considered **local management of open access youth work and closer alignment with campus developments**. This was the most popular suggestion with young people who were keen to be involved in plans for campus developments. There was consensus on closer links with the local community. There were some concerns that the roll out of campus developments is not happening to the same timetable as the youth work developments. There were also some concerns about devolved management of youth workers and maintaining equity of provision in terms of a Wiltshire-wide youth work offer.
20. Suggestion 4 focused on changing the youth work offer through **reduced reliance on use of existing buildings**. Some saw advantages to this option as less full time youth worker time would be spent on managing buildings. Others saw opportunities for promoting and sharing good practice. There were queries about whether having a few "hubs" fitted a rural authority. Young people were also concerned about sharing buildings with young people from other areas and with potentially having to travel more.
21. In summary the consultation responses demonstrated that:
  - Having localised services is popular.
  - A number of respondents wanted a mix and match approach as they liked parts of suggestions 2, 3 and 4.
  - We should maximise partnership working with voluntary and community organisations and avoid overlap and duplication.
  - Given a choice of retaining dedicated youth centres or paid youth workers, young people chose paid youth workers.

The proposals below take account of the consultation on the 4 youth work suggestions and of the wider consultation on the commissioning strategy.

### **Wiltshire Youth Work Offer**

22. The Wiltshire Youth Work Offer will build on existing good practice in setting out clearly the services available to our population. (For example, Wiltshire's Local Offer on Short Breaks for disabled children and their families which has been recognised nationally). It will comprise local open access youth work which will be sustained in the long term through stronger more co-ordinated partnerships and more use of volunteers. In addition, there will be more emphasis on one to one work with vulnerable young people. The Council's Youth Work Offer will be provided by the Integrated Youth Service. The key features of the Youth Work Offer are described below.

#### **Open Access Youth Work**

The Council will continue to fund open access youth work for the 13 to 19 age range in each of the 18 community areas. This funding will reduce in 2012/13 but this does not necessarily mean that local youth centre opening hours will reduce. More volunteers could be recruited to assist with running youth work sessions and/or local communities might fund raise to maintain or increase the youth work provision available, for example, through seeking sponsorship from local businesses. The current funding formula will be maintained.

#### **Higher level targeted youth work support**

There will be a move towards focusing more Council resource on one to one work with young people who are engaging in risky behaviours. This builds on existing good practice already taking place within the Youth Development Service. It is proposed that the Youth Development Service Team Leaders, who are the Council's most senior qualified youth workers, will be based in the multi-disciplinary teams within the Integrated Youth Service.

#### **Better co-ordination of positive activities for young people in local areas**

Youth Advisory Groups will be set up in each local area, linked to Area Boards. Each Youth Advisory Group will be chaired by a young person under 25 and over 50% of members will be under 19 years of age. The Advisory Group will plan and shape local services, making sure local young people know what is available and encouraging partnerships which avoid overlaps and fill gaps. Mechanisms will be established to ensure knowledge and ideas are shared between Youth Advisory Groups.

#### **Stronger partnerships with the voluntary and community sector**

Over time, and through closer partnership working with the voluntary and community sector, it is anticipated that there will be more diversity of provision with some local youth work provision run by the council and some by other organisations. The local Youth Work Offer will provide a

framework for a consistent approach across Wiltshire whilst taking account of local circumstances.

### **Increased use of volunteers**

Youth Advisory Groups will be asked to develop ideas for encouraging volunteers to get involved with youth services and with youth work provided in Council funded youth centres. This will be linked in with Council-wide initiatives to increase the involvement of volunteers in running services.

23. The following action is required to ensure that the new local Youth Work Offer is in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012:
- A review of the role of Team Leaders and Youth Development Co-ordinators within the Youth Development Service.
  - Establishing Youth Advisory Groups with standard Terms of Reference in each of the 18 Community Areas, led by young people and supported by the Integrated Youth Service.
  - Developing a service specification which includes core standards and outcomes required for delivery of the local Youth Work Offer.
  - Developing closer working partnerships with existing voluntary sector organisations.
  - Establishing a 'bank' of volunteers to be involved in running open access youth work.

The work on the Integrated Youth Service noted as a priority in section 15 above and the development of the Wiltshire Youth Work Offer will be aligned and managed through the same process. The service specification noted above will set a framework and standards for the Integrated Youth Service as a whole including the Wiltshire Youth Work Offer. An Implementation Group will be established which will include young people and Integrated Youth Service staff.

### **Youth Work Services Savings**

24. The Council's Financial Plan for 2011 to 2015 indicated that £600,000 savings needed to be made from the Youth Development Service budget from 1 April 2012. In response to feedback received during the consultation process this saving will be made in 2 stages:
- £450,000 from 1 April 2012
  - The remaining £150,000 from 1 April 2013.

This will enable more time to consider the remaining savings in the context of broader plans for the Integrated Youth Service.

The table below outlines how the £450,000 savings from the Youth Development Service budget will be made in 2012/13.

<b>Budget category</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Income generation	£45,000	This will be raised through a combination of subscriptions, fund raising and seeking sponsorship (an average of £2,500 within each Community Area).
Centrally held budgets	£282,500	These savings include vacant posts, savings from support budgets and subscriptions to professional associations. The savings also include an amount which was allocated for young people to influence expenditure on additional activities. However, our aim is for young people to be directly influencing the total spend on youth work services. Young people also now have access to apply for Area Board funding for specific projects.
Area based staffing	£122,500	This is likely to involve a mix of full time and part time sessional staff. Final decisions will be made in the context of the review of the Integrated Youth Service. This amount is equivalent to approximately 4 or 5 full time equivalent posts.
<b>Total</b>	<b>£450,000</b>	

### **Environmental and climate change considerations**

25. No change.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

26. Points to note:

- Local Youth Advisory Groups will be focusing on local needs of all young people.
- Where Bridging Projects which focus on the need of disabled young people have been established these will continue.
- Any savings from the part time sessional youth work budget will be applied using the agreed staff funding formula which takes account of population and deprivation.
- The implementation plan will be a live working document and this will provide an opportunity to review progress from an equalities perspective.

### **Risk Assessment**

27. Points to note:

- The implementation timescale is relatively short and this will need to be managed through robust project planning.
- It is hoped to avoid reducing the number of opening hours. If this is necessary then each youth centre will develop risk assessment and management plans.



- Income generation is a risk and plans for what will happen if income targets are not met will be developed.
- There is a need to develop an overall risk management plan. Key mitigations to a reduced financial allocation are a reshaped service with continuation of open access youth work but with a greater focus on targeted support, phasing of the savings over two years and a clear local Youth Work Offer.

### **Financial Implications**

28. Total estimated spend on young people aged 11 to 19 is outlined in the strategy. This includes funding delegated to schools and expenditure which is the direct focus of other commissioning strategies, such as the commissioning strategy for looked after children. The total estimated expenditure is included to give an idea of the scope of the spend within the Department for Children & Education on young people aged 11 to 19 but some elements of that spend can be more easily influenced by the strategy than others.

The savings proposals for the Youth Service indicate what is achievable in 2012/13 following the responses to the consultation, and subsequent analysis of potential areas for savings. This leaves a shortfall against the initial assumptions within the Council's business plan and the impact of this will need to be considered in the council's financial planning process for next year.

### **Legal Implications**

29. Section 507 A and B of the Education and Inspection Act requires local authorities to secure positive learning opportunities for young people in their free time.

There are no direct legal implications in the proposed strategic approach to the commissioning of youth services. Legal implications will be taken into account when considering specific proposals.

### **Options Considered**

30. Options and suggestions were noted in the draft commissioning strategy.

### **Conclusions**

31. The 11 to 19 commissioning strategy provides a framework for all agencies working with the 11 to 19 age range. It outlines the commissioning priorities identified by young people, staff and partners working with this age range. The strategy includes plans for developing the Council's Integrated Youth Service and for a Youth Work Offer which is sustainable and locally focused.

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**Background Papers**

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

- Report on young people’s consultation on the 13 to 19 commissioning strategy
- Reports on consultation events.
- Written responses to the consultation.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1            11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy

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