

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## **RECONFIGURATION OF YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION**

---

### **Executive Summary**

This report proposes a new strategy for the provision of Youth Services.

The principles adopted are:

- For universal services to be organised locally, linked to the District Boards, Youth Forums and Area Forums.
- For targeted services for the most vulnerable young people to be organised on a borough wide basis.
- To focus our efforts on better but fewer centres, and ensure synergy with the Strategic Asset Review
- To work with partners across the public and voluntary sectors by a process of commissioning.

Wirral Youth Service makes provision through both statutory and voluntary organisations. Currently there are eighteen youth centres, four held by the Children and Young People's Department, two by Cultural Services, eleven by voluntary organisations and one centre in a school. Provision is currently stretched with an inconsistent offer and variable hours of opening. This report proposes a consolidation of provision into the four districts with four major centres that would open for extended hours, in addition there would be seven satellites covering the remaining Area Forums that would open for three nights. One major centre has already received Cabinet approval, Shaftsbury Youth Club and is the subject of a "My Place" bid. The report seeks permission to engage with the Merseyside Fire Service to consider a second centre to be created at Wallasey Fire Station using Youth Capital Plus funding. The two other centres would be at Eastham and West Kirby Leisure Centre. These centres would be identified as part of the Strategic Asset Review. The report also includes a proposal to enhance the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The proposals would in total result in a saving of £150,000.

Cabinet are asked to :

- support the move to four youth centres with satellites;
- grant approval to take forward the proposal to develop in partnership with Merseyside Fire Service Wallasey Fire Station and
- agree the enhancement of the service by the extension of opening hours and improvement of Duke of Edinburgh provision;
- agree to consult on the consequent staffing changes.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At the last Cabinet meeting proposed 2009/10 budget savings from the Children and Young People's Department were presented. A request was made by Cabinet for a follow-up report detailing a proposed reconfiguration setting out the impact of these changes on the operation of the Youth Service. The changes result in a reduction in the youth service budget of £150,000 out of a total budget of £2,650,900.
- 1.2 Nationally the profile for services to young people has been raised through the publication of Aiming High and the Respect Action Plan with the requirement to have an Integrated Youth Support Strategy (IYSS) and Targeted Youth Support (TYS). The proposals contained in this report will take account of these initiatives and the national expectation of youth service provision for young people.
- 1.3 Aiming High was published in 2007 it set out the government's view of youth service provision for young people. A consistent theme in the report was the need for a high quality core offer for young people enabling young people to access a range of services providing both support and developmental opportunities.
- 1.4 The Strategic Asset Review (SAR) is bringing forward proposals for the modernisation of the council's asset base. Youth facilities form part of that asset base. The SAR is the subject of a separate report elsewhere on the agenda. The concept of better but fewer facilities is consistent with the approach taken in the SAR. The location of the youth Super Centres and satellite facilities will be finalised as part of the SAR process to maximise opportunities for corporate working and efficiencies.
- 1.5 The vision for Wirral is to have four large, modern facilities which offer young people a broad menu, providing support, information and access to developmental opportunities. Super Centres will be geographically located with one in each District. Operating over six nights, Super Centres will have at the centre of their operation an offer which is consistent in terms of the youth work curriculum. Subject to consultation with young people the programme on offer could be as follows :

Six nights of operation including :-

1x 1 night Youth Arts in each large Centre

1 x DofE Award in each Centre

1 x night programme of advice and guidance with support for young people in the areas of counselling, substance misuse and homelessness.

The following agencies would also be involved in specific programme area:

Youth Offending Team

Brook

Wirral DAAT

Teenage pregnancy

Other opportunities available will include:

Access to the International Exchange Programme

Access to Youth Forums and the broader participation agenda.

In addition, the Youth & Play Service is rolling out the Health Promoting Youth Units (HPYU) programme. The HPYU programme is complementary to the Health Promoting Schools agenda. Applying the HPYU programme to the super centres and satellites will provide a broad framework from which to plan future youth programmes which will have at the core young people's involvement and the Health and Well Being agenda.

National research for Aiming High and local youth consultation for the MY Place proposal indicated that young people are looking for the youth offer to include week-end provision, this is also regarded as key in diverting young people from anti-social behaviour.

Young people have in research for Aiming High and local provision indicated that, if the provision was of high quality they would travel. All the centres would have access to transport links. Centres would be located in each of our four districts; they would be linked to our four Youth Forums and our District Children and Young People Boards. Through this, they are linked to Area Forums.

- 1.6 In Wirral the Youth Service operates from both statutory and voluntary organisations. In total there are eighteen youth centres and of these four are held directly by the Children and Young People's Department, two are held by Cultural Services, eleven are held by voluntary organisations and one school. The number of nights operated varies from two to four and the menu of opportunities is variable. In addition Response, Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts and the Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Centre operate out of premises held by the voluntary sector and Cultural Services. The Youth Service Outreach Team operates across Wirral.
- 1.7 Young people have indicated in national and local consultations that they would prefer to have better quality provision which is available at week-ends. The proposed changes provide an opportunity to re-configure the youth service to put it on a more secure operating base. They also provide the driver for the necessary change which will provide a more modern and appropriate service to Wirral's young people.
- 1.8 In September 2008, Cabinet agreed the submission of a bid, "My Place", which if successful would provide one of the four world class facilities required. The bid supported a voluntary sector partner, Shaftsbury Youth Club, which would work with satellite centres to provide a service in Birkenhead.

If these proposals are accepted by Cabinet, opportunities would be sought to develop further facilities in west Wirral and south Wirral. These are likely to be located at West Kirby and Eastham Youth Clubs but would be identified as part of the Strategic Asset Review.

- 1.9 An expression of interest in My Place was submitted by Merseyside Fire and Rescue in respect of Wallasey Fire Station. Although the fire station submission was not successful, its location near to a number of hot spots and the absence of youth provision in the area meant that it could be considered for development under Youth Capital Plus. This development could also contribute to Wirral realising its

vision for better services to young people and would, working with satellites, provide a centre in Wallasey.

- 1.10 Meetings with stakeholders took place on 22 October and 12 November, where it was agreed the Wallasey Fire Station could be developed as a youth facility to include provision from a number of providers and week-end opening.
- 1.11 The proposal has a number of linkages to the national Aiming High Strategy. The involvement of a range of partners will ensure that young people are being offered a broad menu. In addition the proposal is based on provision being attractive and available at week-ends. The Fire and Rescue brand is universally recognised and is associated with high quality service provision.

The fire station is in a good location for young people and is close to public transport links. As a working fire station, fire and rescue officers will be on site 24 hrs which provides an added sense of security.

## 2. Changes to Youth Centre Provision

- 2.1 Provision through youth centres is stretched and the offer to young people is inconsistent. The proposal in this report is to have youth provision in each Area Forum. Four Area Forums would have a Super Centre and seven would have a satellite. Provision from the main centres and satellites would be complemented by outreach provision in that district.
- 2.2 Savings resulting from these proposals are as follows:-

**Table1 Synopsis of savings from Youth Service**

District	Costs	Savings	Net Savings
Refer to Appendix 1			
Running costs of two CYPD youth centres		£37,000	£37,000
Reduction of 1 post		£34,279	£34,279
Repair & Maintenance		£6,000	£6,000
Youth Grants		£20,000	£20,000
Withdrawal of Mentoring Support		£38,000	£38,000
Equipment		£8,000	£8,000
D of E Award	£36,584	£36,036	- £568
<b>Total</b>			<b>£150,000</b>

- 2.3 Each large and satellite centre would be staffed by a full time worker and there would be an increase in part time hours to ensure the six night provision. The additional staffing required to enable six night provision in the reconfigured service would be identified by de-commissioning provision at other centres. The main section of staff affected by these proposals would be principal youth workers who are part time workers.

- 2.4 There would be a reduction in grant support to voluntary sector clubs not designated as one of the four large centres or satellites. This may result in a reduction of activity in those voluntary centres unless they secure alternative avenues of support. In addition, current local authority clubs not designated as super centres or satellites would need to close. If Cabinet approves these changes, discussions with voluntary partners will take place and a commissioning specification produced.
- 2.5 The potential pattern of Youth Centre provision would subject to consultation, then be as follows:

	<b>Large Centre</b>	<b>Seven Satellite(s) Commissioned by the LA</b>
Birkenhead	Shaftsbury Youth Club (Voluntary)	To be determined after further consultation and commissioning and as part of the Strategic Asset Review.
Wallasey	Wallasey Fire Station (Partnership)	
South Wirral	Eastham YC (LA) Probable, subject to consultation	
West Wirral	West Kirby YC (LA) Probable, subject to consultation	

Decisions regarding which centres will close will be determined following consultation and the application of criteria linked to location and outcomes for young people linked appropriately to the SAR. A formal process of commissioning will be used to identify the satellite service to be supported. This will involve young people in the decision making process. At the end of this process Cabinet will receive a report outlining which it is proposed to decommission.

### **3. Section Two: Outreach Proposals**

- 3.1 When making significant changes to services it would be reasonable to look at all aspects of the Service this includes Outreach Provision. This is timely as Wirral is part of the Youth Crime Action Plan and is in receipt of additional funding to provide support and challenge to young people at risk.

In addition following the Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review (Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny October 2008) a number of recommendations were made, this proposed reconfiguration is an initial step in responding to those recommendations. Other recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responded to in a separate report to Cabinet.

- 3.2 Currently there are 8 outreach teams covering district areas of Wirral. Only 4 of these teams are led by full-time professionally qualified Neighbourhood Youth Workers. The remaining teams are managed by part time principal workers. Having part time managers puts a restriction on the ability to engage fully in new and emerging initiatives such as the Youth Crime Action Plan and the Participation agenda.

- 3.3 Under the proposals for reconfiguration, these 8 teams will be re-organised into 4, these would be aligned with the super centres and districts. These proposals will provide a more robust structure which will enable the outreach team to more effectively engage with the expanding youth crime agenda.

Each team will be linked to a specific Children and Young People’s District Board and through them to Area Forums. This provides the possibility of devolving control to District Board level as the new structure becomes embedded.

The proposals for the re-organisation of centres and Outreach will release some resources for the enhancement of the very successful Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. This will enable there to be equal access to support across all four districts.

#### 4. Proposals to Enhance Duke of Edinburgh Award

ADDITIONAL COSTS	SAVINGS
<p>Currently Principal Youth Worker (PYW) DoE – 12hrs pw = £12,651 pa</p> <p>Enhancing this post to full time would enable DoE Open Award Centres to operate in all 4 Districts.</p> <p>Full time cost = £36,900 Therefore additional £24,248 Plus additional Level 1 support staff 24hrs per week <b>£12,335</b> <b>TOTAL - £36,604</b></p>	<p>Refer to Appendix 1</p> <p><b><u>TOTAL £36,036</u></b></p>

- 4.1 In the overall proposals this development is cost neutral.

## 5. Remaining Savings Proposals

5.1 Other proposed savings will impact as follows:

<b>Proposed Saving</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Loss of two posts	Reduction in contact with young people
Repair & Maintenance	Reduction in building stock will reduce demand on this budget, there no large impact anticipated.
Youth Grants	Reduced ability to commission services from the voluntary sector.
Youth Offending Service contribution to secondment.	Review this contribution prior to next financial year.
Equipment	Reduction in staffing will reduce the demand on this budget; therefore no large impact is anticipated.

5.2 On current delivery arrangements the Services engages with 9189 young people. Reducing the fte by 1.5 could proportionally reduce the engagement level and reduce the number of recorded and accredited outcomes achieved by young people.

## 6. Wallasey Fire Station

6.1 The proposal to develop the fire station at Wallasey as a multi agency facility is being brought to Cabinet for its support. If the proposal is supported the following actions would be undertaken:

- i) Young people would be asked to advise on the scope of provision.
- ii) Stakeholders would be asked to confirm their involvement in and contribution to the facility.
- iii) A licence/lease would need to be agreed between the Council and the Fire Authority setting out responsibilities of each body.
- iv) Any alterations would require a specification to be developed and then tendered.
- v) Planning permission and building control and approval would need to be sought.
- vi) Agreement will need to be reached with the Fire Authority as to which body will be responsible for carrying out the works.
- vii) Project plan would need to be prepared and submitted to the National Youth Taskforce Team at Department of Children Schools and Families.

6.2 There is an expectation that the allocated money should be spent by April 2009, however staff from the Youth Task Force have indicated that if the money is committed and the project plan indicates a completion date for next year the money can be carried forward.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 This report outlines how the proposed savings of £150,000 can be met.

7.2 Further financial implications are contained within Appendix 1.

## **8. Staffing Implications**

8.1 These proposals reduce the workforce by 1.5 and would be subject to further consultation.

## **9. Equal Opportunities Implications**

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **10. Community Safety Implications**

10.1 The proposals allow for a co-ordinated response to community safety and enables the service to engage with the Youth Crime Action Plan.

## **11. Local Agenda 21 Implications**

11.1 All these proposals will encourage the positive engagement of young people.

## **12. Planning Implications**

12.1 There may be planning implications for the Wallasey Fire Station development and part of the consultation process would be to ensure synergy with the Strategic Asset Review.

## **13. Anti Poverty Implications**

13.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **14. Social Inclusion Implications**

14.1 The Youth Service seeks to address social exclusion and promote inclusion.

## **15. Local Member Implications**

15.1 This report affects all wards.

## **16. Background Papers**

16.1 Aiming High – Youth Outreach A Ten Year Strategy For Young People.

Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review – Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee October 2008.

## **17. Proposals**

- 17.1 Cabinet is asked to support the development of Wallasey Fire Station as a multi agency youth provision.
- 17.2 Cabinet is asked to support the move to the development of four main centres with seven satellites with final locations to be determined as part of the Strategic Asset Review process. The Director will report back to Cabinet regarding the outcome of the commissioning process for satellites for formal approval by March 2009.
- 17.3 That the Cabinet accept the following proposed savings subject to making the resolution subject to statutory legal requirements to consult about the potential redundancies and the staffing implications be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.
- i.
  - ii. See Appendix 1
  - iii.
  - iv. Reduction in Repair and Maintenance grant £6,000
  - v. Reduction in Equipment budget £8,000
  - vi. Reduction in Youth Commission Grant £20,000
  - vii. Reduction in running costs of two youth clubs £37,000

RECOMMENDED: That the proposals set out in paragraph 17 of the report be agreed.

**HOWARD COOPER**  
**DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

