



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 16 October 2024

REPORT TITLE:	YOUTH SERVICE STATUTORY DUTY DEVELOPMENT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

During the Children, Young People and Education Committee on the 18th October 2023 it was resolved that :-

1. The youth services provided for children and young people be reviewed and scrutinised.
2. The receipt of a further report on how the Youth Offer meets the requirements of the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996, issued September 2023 be agreed.

This report sets out headline changes since October 2023 and identifies continuous improvement themes identified when assessing our offer against Section 507b of the Education Act 1996 Statutory Duty. A further report will be brought back to Committee in Quarter 4 24/25, setting out impact and outcomes for Wirral's youth offer.

Section 507B requires local authorities to, so far as reasonably practicable, secure access for all qualifying young people to a sufficient quantity of 'youth services', namely:

- a sufficient quantity of educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and sufficient facilities for such activities; and
- a sufficient quantity of recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities.

The report is aligned to Wirral Council's Plan priority, working for brighter futures for our children, young people and their families and it is aligned with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priority 3 which supports the best start in life for children and young people.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to:

1. Children, Young People and Education Committee are recommended to note that the Council is fulfilling its duty to provide a youth offer.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide youth services. Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 states that local authorities must 'secure as far as necessary practicable, sufficient provision of educational and recreational for young people' and make sure young people have a say in the local offer. The Local Authority meets its statutory responsibility through a localised youth offer which includes provision delivered by the Local Authority Youth Services and commissioned third sector partners, at both Universal and Targeted levels.

1.2 What is Youth Work

Youth work is a dynamic and impactful field that focuses on engaging, supporting, and empowering young people to reach their full potential. It plays a crucial role in shaping the lives of adolescents and emerging adults by providing guidance, mentorship, and opportunities for personal growth and development.

At its core, youth work is about building positive relationships with young people, often in non-formal or informal settings. These interactions are designed to create a safe and supportive environment where young people can explore their interests, overcome challenges, and make informed decisions about their lives.

1.3 Youth Work Values (National Youth Agency)

- Young people voluntarily participating.
- Utilising young people's view of the world
- Treating young people with respect
- Seeking to develop young people's skills and attitudes rather than remedy 'problem behaviours'.
- Helping young people develop stronger relationships and collective identities.
- Respecting and valuing differences
- Promoting the voice of young people

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Due to this report being a non-key decision and an update to the Committee, other options have not been considered in the context of this overview report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 National Youth Agency

3.2 The National Youth Agency (NYA) is the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) for youth work in England. Officers have been using the National Youth Agency (NYA) Statutory Duty Check List to evaluate and consider continuous improvement opportunities for the offer available to Wirral young people. (For more information on the NYA Check list see Background Papers).

- 3.3 The Local Authority meets its statutory responsibility through a localised youth offer which includes provision delivered by the Local Authority Youth Services and commissioned third sector partners, this covers the NYA areas of Universal and Targeted youth work levels.
- 3.4 **How does Wirral comply with the Statutory Duty**
- 3.5 In line with the NYA toolkit, Local Authority Youth Services have been reorganised in to two distinct areas:
- Targeted Youth Services
 - Universal Youth and Play Services
- 3.6 The integration into the MDT framework allows Universal Youth and Play to benefit from increased visibility among various community partners. This visibility will ensure that the needs and voices of young people are prominently represented in broader community discussions and decision-making processes. It also facilitates enhanced coordination and communication with other service providers, enhancing the overall support network available to young people and their families.
- 3.7 The current Youth Space offer has been designed to ensure a consistent and evidence-based service across the borough. This will include the introduction of a new five day per week twilight youth offer running daily from 3–6 pm, providing a dedicated space for young people to access support and activities after school.
- 3.8 Visibility and Communication of Youth Offer across Digital Platforms will ensure the entire youth offer is visible, and that performance and impact content are regularly shared across digital platforms such as ZILLO, SENDLO, and Family Toolbox. This will increase awareness and engagement from the community and stakeholders, highlighting the impact and reach of youth services.
- 3.9 A development that has happened since the last report to committee is that Universal Youth and Play services have been integrated into Wirral's four Family Help Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT). This strategic move positions Universal Youth and Play services at the heart of community engagement working across the thresholds of need and linking closely with internal partners from Family Matters, Early Childhood and Domestic Abuse Hub.
- 3.10 The NYA checklist highlighted 'nine essentials' of a local youth work offer. These are: -
- Develop a needs assessment
 - Youth Engagement
 - Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Engagement
 - Local Youth Offer Plan
 - Quality of Youth Work Practice
 - Workforce planning and support
 - National Youth Work Curriculum
 - Safeguarding

- Monitoring, evaluation and Impact

3.11 Mapping local needs and considered the specific local context and needs of local young people; One such area was:-

The Young People Needs Analysis Survey has been written and the questions have been consulted with:

- Youth Voice Group,
- SEND Youth Voice Group,
- Children in Care Committee,
- Kilgarth School.

The survey will be going live for 6 weeks towards the end of September; and will be undertaken annually.

3.12 **Youth Service Workforce Training**

The NYA check list states that all staff and volunteers should have the opportunity to access and engage in training and development activities that support their own needs and those of young people. A Training Matrix has been developed to ensure staff have access to relevant training to enhance their roles. This will be recorded and stored centrally so senior managers will have oversight of staff continuing professional development.

3.13 **Priorities for Youth Service Development**

To effectively address the priority area concerning the review and enhancement of the LA Youth Offer. The NYA Statutory Duty Check lists suggests that we need to focus on the following key areas.

3.14 **Youth Service to undertake a Needs Analysis for Wirral.** This is an ongoing piece of work. Key areas have been identified to focus on for the analysis, these are:-

- Population
- Deprivation
- Poverty
- Free school meals
- Low-income families
- Education
- Health
- SEND
- Youth Survey Perception Data

3.15 **Develop a robust set of performance indicators with LA youth services** to ensure data capture and reporting are visible to the local authority. The following documents will be embedded into services to aid in indicator development:

- NYA Nation Youth Work Curriculum,
- Quality Mark Framework
- Hear By Right Document

(for more information, please see background papers)

- 3.16 **Development of a shared reporting system through Liquid Logic** that works for all youth teams which will be comprehensive, consistent, and shared reporting system for the youth offer through Liquid Logic.
- 3.17 **Ensure Regular Content Sharing on Digital Platforms** by developing a content calendar and assign responsibilities for regular updates from services and young people.
- 3.18 **Young people’s evaluations to be embedded within services** and to conduct Initial evaluation of the framework and reporting system to gather feedback, review performance data, and assess the impact of new systems. This will be done quarterly.
- 3.19 **Tracking continuous improvement**
To ensure continuous improvement, officers will use the ‘Statutory Duty Working Document’ (see an example word doc in Background papers) to monitor and review actions in accordance with the National Youth Agency Check List. This document will be live and reviewed monthly as part of the governance arrangements.
- 3.20 **Other Developments**
- 3.21 **Multi-Disciplinary Teams** - to look at youth provision within the Local Authority and linking in with Pathfinders to learn where youth service and support and fit within to MDT’s, localities and communities.
- 3.22 **Youth Spaces** - As part of this continuous improvement the aim is to complete this over a phased period across 3 Youth Spaces beginning with West Kirby Youth Space and branching out across to South Wirral, and Wallasey. West Kirby aim to open their twilight youth offer in September 2024. This new offer will be an opportunity for greater integration of wider youth collective partners enabling a diverse programme of support to be offered from our youth spaces.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. The follow up impact report will include financial information.
- 4.2 Below is a breakdown of service funding streams:
- Local Authority Core Budget
 - NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB)
 - Public Health
 - Combatting Drugs Partnership

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide youth services. Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 states that local authorities must ‘secure as far as necessary practicable, sufficient provision of educational and recreational for young people’ and make sure young people have a say in the local offer. Through provision of the youth offer, Wirral Council is meeting its statutory duty.

See (Appendix A) for Guidance for Local Authorities providing Youth Services published by the National Youth Agency October 2020.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications arising in the context of this overview report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Failing to deliver a co-ordinated youth offer would mean the Council not meeting its statutory responsibilities and presents the risk of missed opportunity, in terms of meaningfully tackling issues that lead to health inequalities and reducing demand for high-cost, acute services.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Participation and engagement is a core aspect of youth services. The Youth Voice and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Youth Voice Groups meet on a weekly basis to ensure there is regular opportunity for engagement and consultation. The annual Youth Parliament provides an opportunity for borough-wide engagement and the Zillo website allows regular online surveys and feedback to be collected from a wide range of young stakeholders.

8.2 As part of the Needs Analysis the service will be conducting a Youth Survey aimed at getting young people's feedback and ideas for future development on of the Local Authority Youth Services. The questions used have been agreed by strategic leads from Local Authorities in the North West. After consultation with Wirral young people there have been some additional questions added.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity.

9.2 All employees of Wirral Children's Services undertake equality and diversity training and there are leads for protected characteristics as well as support groups for young people which are thematic, such as SEND and LGBTQ+.

9.3 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and reviewed for Wirral Youth Offer. The EIA can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/eia-youth-offer-.pdf/download?inline>

9.4 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and reviewed for the Wirral Safer Adolescence Strategy. The EIA can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from the delivery of the youth offer. It has no impact on the emission of greenhouse gases. The views of young people are reported to Cool Wirral Climate Emergency Group and there is an Environment Lead on the Youth Partnership.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Many community organisations are significant stakeholders in Wirral Youth Collective.

11.2 Fundamental to the youth offer is the importance of community. It is recognised that individuals and families will be more likely to sustain positive outcomes if they are living, with a sense of belonging, in a community where support, friendship and advice are easily available.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - LA Guidance for Providing Youth Services - [Guidance for Local Authorities on Providing Youth Services](#)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Documents to be embedded into Youth Services

Hear By Right is an organisational development tool built on a framework of indicators that describe best practice, supporting organisations to plan, develop and evaluate their participation practices and provision. It fosters a culture of development; a continual journey for keeping young people at the heart of decision making.

NYA Youth Work Curriculum sets out a youth work curriculum framework for England. Its purpose is to enable a greater understanding of youth work practice, provide an educational framework and act as a reference tool to be used by decision makers, policy makers, commissioners, youth workers and young people.

NYA Quality Framework is based on three key areas: young people's personal and social development and learning, the quality of youth work practice, and the quality of leadership and management within the organisation. The standards provide descriptions of the key characteristics that underpin the best practice youth work in these areas

NYA Statutory Duty Check List This toolkit is the core of a suite of documents and resources available from the NYA. The document sets out the standards, frameworks, factors and steps local authorities should consider when developing their local youth offer

Working document on check list an example of how monitoring and reviewing the NYA Check list

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee in accordance with section a of its Terms of Reference:

(a) exercising management, oversight and delivery of services to children and young people in relation to their care, wellbeing, education or health, with the exception of any powers reserved to full Council.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children, Young People and Education Committee Item 49 – An Overview of Youth Work In Wirral	18 th October 2023