



Purpose: For Decision

Committee report

Committee	CABINET
Date	TUESDAY, 21 JUNE 2011
Title	THE FUTURE OF THE YOUTH SERVICE
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR FIRE, CULTURE AND RESIDENTS' SERVICES

PURPOSE

1. This paper sets out proposals to develop a new and efficient youth service, which more young people in the appropriate age group wish to use.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient activities (as far as is reasonably practicable) for young people aged between 13 and 19 years of age (or up to 24 for those with a learning disability). It does not have to provide services for young people under the age of 13, for which schools have lead responsibility, with Extended Services and the new Pupil Premium providing resources for this. At present, the Council's Youth Service is offering activities to people younger than 13 and should instead be concentrating its limited resources in supporting those for whom it has a basic legal duty. Young people aged between 13 and 19 (and up to 24 for those with a declared learning need) need more specific services, which are where those young people want to be and where they can meet other young people, with safe and educational activities.
3. The Council needs to ensure that its Youth Service is available to everyone aged between 13 and 19 (and 19-24 for those with a learning disability). This means that all young people of that age should be able to use the Youth Service if they wish to do so. This includes anyone with any form of disability or special need, or even just those who find it difficult to access youth provision at present, either because they live too far away from an established centre or because it is too expensive to travel there. At present, young people with disabilities cannot access some of the Council's youth centres.
4. The Council recognised in 2008 that a review of the Youth Service was necessary, when the service's own figures showed that only 16% of young people in the appropriate age group were making use of their local youth activities. This was below the national average and suggested that the service was not meeting the needs of the Island's young people.

5. The Isle of Wight Youth Council led an important first stage of the consultation, which ran from August to October 2009. Parish and Town Councils were given until December 2009, to allow them enough time to respond to the consultation.
6. On 13 April 2010, in response to the consultation, Cabinet agreed the principles for the changes. These were the principles set out in the "*Isle of Wight Children, Young People and Families Plan 2009 – 2012*". These principles include listening to young people and representing their interests, whether that is in protecting them from harm, or supporting them to train and achieve their potential, or focusing on the most vulnerable, making it easier for everyone to access good youth services.
7. It was decided to delay the start of the changes until later in 2010, to allow more time to put together proposals.
8. The proposed implementation plans were published on 12 November 2010 and a series of public meetings were held during November and December to invite young people and all other people with an interest in the Youth Service to comment. These meetings also gave local community groups the chance to express interest in running their local youth services, working with the Council to support them.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

9. The plans to reorganise the Service were designed to help the Isle of Wight Council to meet the following corporate objectives:
 - Delivering Better Services through the Council business transformation programme;
 - The 'Inspiring Island' theme of the Sustainable Community Strategy "*Eco Island*" and the Council's *Corporate Plan*;
 - To contribute to the delivery of the key elements in the medium term financial strategy set out in the *Isle of Wight Council Corporate Plan 2009 – 2013*.

THE REASONS FOR CHANGE

10. The Council has a statutory duty to provide Youth Services as far as reasonably practicable (this is explained later under "Legal Implications"), and it has to do this for a specific age range of young people of all abilities.
11. The current Youth Service is providing services to young people who are not in the age range specified. Only 16% of 13 to 19 year olds used the service in 2007/2008. This means the new plans need to make sure activities are in place to meet both the needs of young people now, and also to meet the needs of more young people with a more attractive youth service in the future.
12. There are young people in areas of the Island where "need" levels (such as places with fewer jobs and more people receiving benefits) are high, who find it more difficult to use youth services. This may be because they cannot afford the public transport to get to their nearest activities, or it may be because the services on offer locally are not suitable for them. The Youth Service should be making sure that everyone can use their services and this will mean concentrating some of the youth work in the future on young people from areas with higher levels of "need".

13. The Youth Service is not providing services consistently, which are accessible for young people with disabilities, across the Island. This means that it is not possible for all young people on the Isle of Wight to use the Youth Service if they are in the 13-19 age group (or to 24 for those with learning disabilities). The Youth Service must make sure it focuses on these young people in the future too, so that they can join in with activities, can enjoy learning with a varied group of people of their age, and can use those youth centres which the Council keeps, because the buildings are suitable.
14. In 2009/10 the current Youth Service spent £71 for every young person coming to it, but other local authorities' youth services (with similar populations of young people) spent an average of only £52 for every young person in their services. The service's spending needs to be reduced and made more focused and relevant. It will do this by concentrating its spending on the age range that the law requires – young people aged between 13 and 19 (or 24 years old, as explained above) and on young people who need the service most.
15. The Youth Service's high costs are also in part, because it spends money on running, maintaining and repairing old buildings. Most of these are not designed to be youth centres and are not fully accessible to young people with disabilities.

THE NEW DIRECTION

16. If Members agree the recommended option, there are a number of ways that the Youth Service could be different in the future, depending on the representations received which will be carefully considered and taken into account. These can be summarised as follows:
- The Council wants to concentrate its youth workers on professional youth work, carried out by trained professionals, in a way which is described in paragraph 2 above. These youth workers should be helped to use their training to work in communities, offering a flexible service which is available where young people want to go. This may involve mobile provision and youth cafes being used in communities, and will sit alongside and complement much of the quality provision overseen by the voluntary and community sectors.
 - The Council wants to move youth workers away from managing and administering unsuitable buildings, to focus on their work in communities. Where there is evidence that a need exists, youth centres may stay run by the Council in the short-term. It may be that existing buildings can be put to better use in the future, bringing youth work together with other community activity to form "hubs". These "hubs" could provide the place in areas, that youth workers will need to have as a base for their work.
 - The Council wants to support communities, through funding and also training and development opportunities. This would provide youth activities for young people in areas which are not the core business of the youth service, as set out in paragraph 3 above.
17. Under these three principal areas of change, the detailed changes which are suggested are:
- a. The service would provide services only for young people aged 13 and over, up to 19 or 24, depending on need, as in paragraph 2 above.

- b. The service would focus on making it easy for all young people aged 13-19/24 to join in youth activities, no matter their ability, background or where they live. In fact, the service would concentrate on making sure that young people with disabilities and from areas of higher “need” across the Island are involved.
- c. The service would no longer provide activities for young people aged under 13. The Council would make resources available to communities, to support some additional work, such as places where there is not a high level of “need”, as in paragraph 12 above.
- d. The service would be run through a number of areas (the precise number will be made clear when the formal decision is taken, based on school clusters and other partners’ area-based working). Youth work teams would be brought together to share ideas and help one another to provide youth services in a range of different places and for different groups of young people.
- e. The areas would have partnership boards, which will be the way that local youth services are planned in the future. These partnership boards could be made up of local community groups, Youth Service workers, young people and Council partner organisations such as health and police, so that every group of people that has an interest in youth services, can take part in the planning. These partnership boards would draw up plans, based on what local young people want and need. The Youth Service would then use them to make a single plan for youth services across the Island, which would have been shaped by young people.
- f. The service would concentrate on offering youth work where young people already go, or working with partners to create new places to go, rather than offer activities in old buildings which are not designed or suitable to be youth clubs.
- g. The only youth centres which would remain run by the Council would become the hubs for area-based activities. Youth Centres are currently run by the Council working with groups of local people, on management committees. These management committees help Centres to hire out space and fundraise and have been very helpful. There will be fewer centres, and they will be run centrally, so management committees will no longer be needed. The members of these committees have a wide range of skills and experience, along with a good understanding of particular local youth issues, which the Service will want to make use of by involving these individuals in the partnership boards. Communities may wish to take on some of these buildings, through leases or buying the sites, to continue to offer activities, but the sites would no longer be run by the Council.
- h. When the service has been organised into areas, this will mean that the staffing structure will need to be altered, to make sure that the right numbers of trained youth workers are in the right areas of the Island. Youth workers’ contracts and conditions of service will have to be reviewed, in line with the new service design and the wider review of staff terms and conditions underway at the Council. This will mean a period of consultation with staff on changes to terms and conditions of employment and a new structure. This will happen during the autumn of 2011, with recruitment to a new structure following after that.
- i. If the new changes were put in place, the Council would be likely in the future invite organisations to apply to manage the whole Youth Service. The Council would do this, by using a Commissioning Prospectus. The Prospectus would make sure that the single organisation taking up the management of the Youth Service, on behalf of the Council, finds ways that local community organisations have a say in how the Service is run.

18. The recommended way forward is that communities and young people can make representations on the proposals as set out. Representations may be comments on the proposals, but they may also be applications from community groups, to take on some local youth services, or suggestions for how the Council could consider doing things differently for young people. This extra period of representation would run from the date of any Cabinet decision arising out of this paper being implemented until 30 September 2011. The Island's Youth Council has been asked by the Isle of Wight Council's Scrutiny Panel for Children and Young People, to take the lead in building a response from young people.
19. Once the representations have been considered, a formal decision will be taken on the future of the Youth Service. That decision would take into account the new changes and any comments received during the period of representations.
20. A summary of what would happen to Council-run youth centres, under these proposals, is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Summary of what is proposed to happen to each Council-run Youth Centre

Site	What will IWC do with this site?	What else will be available? (other activities may be available at a later date)
Brading	IWC will stop using this building for its own youth activities. There will be active discussion with the Town Council, about its future use. Building may then be for sale, rent or different use.	Local councils and local schools may offer other activities.
Cowes	IWC will stop using this building for its own youth activities, once another site is found. Building will then be for sale, rent or different use, possibly for alternative youth provision.	Cowes Youth Forum wants to work with local young people to set up a youth café, when they can find the right place to open up. The new Cowes secondary school site may offer other youth activities.
East Cowes	IWC will stop using this site for its own youth activities from 31 March 2012. Building will then be for sale, rent or different use.	East Cowes Town Council is looking to provide this service from another site in the town. There will be a mobile/outreach service on Hawthorn Meadows.
Freshwater	IWC will work with local groups to set up a new facility which links with services already available in the town, and which offers a range of youth services which are provided and supported by the community.	Freshwater Parish Council and local community groups are working to provide more joined-up local activities for young people in the area.
Newport	IWC will keep the King James Centre, and has invested in a youth café, with Newport Town Council, local churches and other local partners such as Police. There will be longer opening hours and also on Saturdays. 29 High Street may not continue to be used by the Youth Service, and the Council will stop renting the site.	A lot of activities for young people will be offered, which will involve Newport Town Council, Quay Arts Centre, local secondary schools, John's Club, Beaulieu House and St George's School, plus IWC Leisure Services. A mobile/outreach service will be on offer in Carisbrooke and Camp Hill areas.
Niton	IWC working with the local primary school to use the site, to help with school	Niton Parish Council may pay for extra youth work sessions in the week. There will be a mobile/outreach service on offer in Chale,

	reorganisation and continued youth activities.	Shorwell and Brighstone.
Ryde	IWC looking to rent or sell the building to another organisation, but with youth services still available in the evenings. Annex is not used very much by the Youth Service, so the Council will stop using it and the building will be available for sale, rent or different use.	A mobile/outreach service will be on offer in Oakfield and Elmfield.
Sandown	IWC is looking for a different site, but will continue using the current building until a new site is found. Building will then be for sale, rent or different use.	Different local organisations, such as the new secondary school, police and local voluntary groups in the Bay area will work together closely, to make more youth activities available. The mobile/outreach service will be increased, to cover Alverstone, Newchurch and Winford.
Shorwell	IWC will stop using this site from 31 March 2012. Building will then be for sale, rent or different use.	A mobile/outreach service will be on offer in Shorwell and Brighstone.
Ventnor	IWC looking to work with local groups, and other Council services, to keep a base for youth services in the town. This may or may not be in the current building.	Local partners will work to keep a youth base in the town.
Wootton	IWC wants to have youth services in this area, possibly school based, and will not use this site once that new base is found. Building will then be for sale, rent or different use.	Local partners may want to use the site for other work with young people
Yarmouth	This building is no longer in use and will be available for sale, rent or different use, as soon as the final decision is made on the service reorganisation.	IWC wants to work with local schools, local businesses and community groups to offer youth work activities. IWC wants to concentrate on using the local natural environment with outdoor activities, working with IWC Parks and Countryside/Leisure teams.

CONSULTATION

21. The first part of the public consultation on the planned changes ran from 3 August 2009 through to the Big Day Out on 11 October 2009. The different ways people were invited to comment on the changes included

:

- Online survey through schools and the Council's website, developed with children and young people;
- Paper-based survey for adults;
- Three "Question Time" panels for young people, led by the Isle of Wight Youth Council;
- Travelling video diary room and talkback panels for young people in a range of places, ending at the Big Day Out;
- Staff and volunteer conference;
- Three school governing bodies, local management committee and town and parish council locality briefings and
- Open access public 'surgeries' at all the main local libraries.

22. When the young people's replies were analysed, approximately half of the people who had replied, attended a youth club and did not want their club to close, even though the consultation was about youth services, not the buildings. The other half did not attend a youth club because they did not like what was on offer or that there was not an offer near where they lived. Most young people who replied, rated meeting friends as the most important part of a youth club to them. 80% listed a young people's music festival as the activity they most wanted, followed by 48% wanting a swimming pool and 34% wanting a youth café open during school holidays and weekends.

23. The next stage in the consultation process was that a report was published, which contained the planned changes, based on the first consultation feedback. This happened during November and December 2010 and the suggested changes were presented at a series of seven community road shows around the Island. Local groups and young people were invited to offer their help and to identify the actions that would be needed, to make the plans happen, once agreed.

24. The Council received 11 written responses. Four came from parish and town councils, two from local management committees and three from young people stating they liked the youth club in their area. The other two were from voluntary and community groups, asking what support they could receive, to run youth activities themselves.

25. The Council has looked at the changes again, because it has had to reduce the amount it spends on all its services. This is because the Government has reduced the Council's funding and there is not the opportunity to increase council tax to raise more money to spend locally. This new smaller budget to spend on services will contain less to spend on youth services. This means that the original feedback and suggested changes to the service need to be looked at again. This report sets out the way that the changes suggested earlier in the consultation could be made, with less money to spend. The additional time for representations is to make sure that Island people can comment on these new changes, and that these comments can be considered carefully and taken into account before a final decision is taken.

26. Representations should be made either by e-mail to youthservicereview@iow.gov.uk or to the Commissioning Manager for Building Community Capacity, County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

27. In the 2009/10 budget set by the Council in February 2009, the youth service was set a savings target of £128,000. This saving was intended to be made by reorganising the service following a benchmarking exercise, so that it spent broadly the same on each young person as similar councils on the mainland. This target was not achieved in 2009/10 or in 2010/11 because the consultation process and the resulting paper to Cabinet had to be put on hold until the reorganisation was ready.

28. The savings target was again put on hold in the 2011/12 budget to give the service more time to consider the results of the consultation and to resubmit the reorganisation paper to cabinet. However, the savings target will need to be achieved in 2012/13 and future years as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

29. The holding costs of former youth centre buildings, once they have been declared surplus to requirements but prior to their disposal, will need to be charged against the Council's revenue budget until the assets' future is clear. Such holding costs will include empty rates liabilities, utility standing charges and limited usage, and any necessary security costs. The savings target should be adjusted to allow for such costs. Any asset sales will generate a capital receipt for the Council and the cost of such a disposal can be offset against the value of the capital receipt.

30. When the original decision to reorganise the service was taken, the Council's grant settlement from Government had not been reduced. Now that the results of the Spending Review are known, and the Council's grant settlement has been reduced, with a further review of local government finance pending, the Council cannot afford to deliver the original proposals from the *Together We Can Make Things Happen* document in full. The service needs to meet its statutory duties and support communities to provide youth activities across the Island, within the amount of money that it can now afford.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

31. The Isle of Wight Council must ensure that the statutory duty set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for youth provision is met. In respect of young people aged 13 to 19 years old (and 20 to 24 with learning disability) the Isle of Wight Council has a statutory duty and must, so far as is reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to:

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

32. In determining the principles for the establishment of a reorganised youth service the Isle of Wight Council has a duty to ensure that finite resources are spent in such a way as to ensure the highest quality of provision and best value for money. When considering what is reasonably practicable, an authority may take into account its

resources, capabilities and other priorities, as well as that of its partners in the public, private and voluntary sector.

33. Proposed changes to employee terms and conditions will be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements as set out in employment legislation and also conducted in line with the Council's own employment policies and procedures. This will include adequate notice and collective and individual consultation as necessary.
34. Any future transfer of staff must be carried out in compliance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 to avoid Employment Tribunal claims.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

35. The Council has the power to dispose of property under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, which means that "best consideration" must have been achieved. "Best consideration" does not necessarily mean being paid the highest possible price, because it could also include benefits such as improving a local community facility or increasing local residents' involvement in services. The Council has a "fiduciary duty" to the public, to make sure that it behaves responsibly with public money and protects residents' interests and service delivery.
36. Where the proposed changes show that the Youth Service will stop using a current youth centre, it is recommended that that site will stop being used by 31 March 2012. At least three months' notice would be given, explaining that the Council is not continuing to use the building for youth services. In the case of the Ryde Annex and Yarmouth youth centres, these buildings would be available for sale, rent or different use immediately after the decision on the future of the Service is made.
37. All current hirers of the buildings were invited to the consultation sessions following publication of the plans. They have been written to since then, informing them that changes may happen, depending on what is decided about the reorganisation of the Youth Service, and that following any decision they too would be written to with three months' notice.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

38. The equality impact assessments have been undertaken on the plans to ensure that the equality and diversity implications of any decision are identified and carefully considered. The assessments are being taken into account in the decision making process and actions will be taken to mitigate any impact. The reorganised service will promote equality and diversity and ensure that the services provided and the decisions made meet the needs of all children and young people. Each change has been examined, so that the impact of that change has been considered as part of the whole reorganisation.
39. The plans have therefore been informed by the equality impact assessments and take account of the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 and the equality duty.

OPTIONS

40. Option A

To agree to a period for representations on the proposed changes, to run from the date of any Cabinet decision being implemented until 30 September 2011, with a view to a final decision being made in October 2011 which takes into account all comments received to date.

41. Option B

Not to agree to the period for representations.

42. Option C

To agree to keep the current arrangements, with no changes and with alternative ways suggested to make the necessary budget savings.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Option A

43. This is the recommended option and is lower risk option because it gives residents and young people an opportunity to comment on the revised plans for the Youth Service in the future. It shows a clear response to the consultations already undertaken and the published plans, but also takes into account the change in the national economy since the consultation was carried out. The original proposals would have cost more than the Council, with its reduced grant from the Government, could afford now. There will be some reputational risk to the Council, because the changes may not be popular with the people who have run and rented the youth centres, but many of these buildings were not designed to be used as youth centres and the Council may have more risks in time, from the use of unsuitable buildings for young peoples' activities. There may also be some reputational risks associated with the Council focusing on 13-19 year olds, rather than providing for younger age groups. However, the Council's offer to support community groups with resources to provide activities for young people up to 13 years will mitigate this.

Option B

44. This is a high risk option because it will not offer residents the opportunity to comment on the changed proposals, which could result in a successful legal challenge. It would also not offer communities the opportunity to apply to run some local youth services, and the Council would also run the risk of missing some suggestions from the public, on how the services could be improved for young people. The same reputational risks, because of the focusing of services on young people aged over 13, could apply, as in Option A above. Again, however, the same mitigating action by the Council, finding resources to support youth services for under-13s in communities, run by communities, would mean that alternative activities could be provided.

Option C

45. This is a high-risk option, because it would not make any service savings to allow the Council to balance its budgets each year, and Members will need to indicate other areas where the savings will be found. It would also not allow the Council to show that

it is offering Islanders value for money in how it works with young people, because the Youth Service budget would continue to be spent on services which are discretionary, which we do not have to provide. In the current economic situation, this is not possible; the Council must make savings in everything that it does, because it has less money to spend. This option would be high risk because it would see the Council continue to run youth service activities from buildings which are not suitable for that work and which it has no budget to improve to reach that standard and then maintain in the future.

EVALUATION

Option A

46. Option A is in line with the Council's overall move from direct delivery to the commissioning of services from other organisations. If the changes were put in place as in paragraphs 16 and 17 above, the Youth Service would be spending its budget on young people in ways which are more efficient, and reaching more young people in ways and places that they want. This option is recommended because it makes sure that the changes which are proposed, where money is spent on working with and for young people by being spent on trained youth workers rather than on running buildings, are shared with the public before a final decision is made and that any comments made are taken into account fully in the final decision making process. This is important, because many things have changed since the start of the review, and the Council can no longer afford the suggestions made after the first stage of consultation. The Island's residents, particularly young people, need the chance to comment on the new proposals and for those comments to be taken into account. The new proposed changes would be made in a way that meets recent legislation and guidance and enables savings to be made. The changed plans are based on the comments from the consultations and previous published plans, bearing in mind the new economic climate. The commissioning-out of youth provision offers the opportunity to deliver a wider range of things to do and a greater choice of places to go that are provided more efficiently than the Council is able to continue to do, by delivering the service directly. This option also offers communities a specific opportunity to apply to run local youth services, and to suggest ways in which youth activities could be improved in different local areas. As well as this, Option A allows the Council to make some savings, but still keep 80% of its Youth Service budget, to invest directly in services for the young people of the Isle of Wight.

Option B

47. This option is not recommended because it does not allow residents, particularly young people, to respond to the changed proposals and to have their views taken into account. It would also mean that communities were not offered the opportunity to apply to help or run local services for young people. The basis of the youth service is giving all young people a voice and opportunities; this option would not offer either.

Option C

48. This option is not recommended because it fails to tackle the problems which led to the consultation, it ignores young people's feedback on what they want, and it makes it harder for young people to have youth service activities available in their area. This option also focuses on keeping buildings open rather than spending on young people themselves, and it does not allow the Council to explore ways in which local groups

could improve services to young people in communities. This option would also have an impact on other Council services, where more savings would have to be made, to allow the Service's current level of spending to continue.

RECOMMENDATION

49. Option A - To agree to a period for representations on the proposed changes, to run from the date of any Cabinet decision being implemented until 30 September 2011, with a view to a final decision being made in October 2011 which takes into account all comments received to date

APPENDICES ATTACHED

- 50. [Appendix A](#) - Equality Impact Assessment - potential impact on young people and communities
- 51. [Appendix B](#) - Equality Impact Assessment – potential impact on staff
- 52. [Appendix C](#) - Headline summary of 2010 public review exercise

Contact Point: Astrid Davies, Commissioning Manager for Building Community Capacity
Tel: 01983 823804; email: astrid.davies@iow.gov.uk

IAN ANDERSON
Strategic Director
Community Wellbeing and Social Care

COUNCILLOR BARRY ABRAHAM
Cabinet Member for
Fire, Culture and Residents' Services