

# Questions and Answers

**Council**  
**Tuesday, 4th March, 2014**

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# **Council Meeting**

## **4 March 2014**

Questions and Answers



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# Public Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

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**(a) Question to be answered by the Executive Member for Children and Young People, Youth Service, Education submitted by Mrs Maryanne Thomas:**

*“West Berkshire has a long standing reputation for appreciating, valuing and supporting the work carried out by volunteers in the community, as well as acknowledging the significant economic contribution in terms of time and expertise. In the proposed cuts for 2014/15 the Council is cutting 33% off the budget for vulnerable young people over two years. Do these cuts mean that the Council will compromise its standard of support and appreciation of volunteers working with vulnerable young people?”*

**The Executive Member for Children and Young People, Youth Service, Education answered:**

Volunteers are involved in a number of our services and provide valuable support to children and young people. It is critical that they are properly supported and we will continue to do this. We very much appreciate their contribution.

The Council fully appreciates the excellent work of the volunteers in youth services, and the support we receive from the voluntary sector in helping to enable to provide quality services across many areas.

The work done by the voluntary sector, particularly groups such as Berkshire Youth, is invaluable to us in ensuring that our young people have youth clubs and other facilities available to them. This allows us to focus on the more vulnerable young people in the district. Adventure Dolphin work very successfully with vulnerable children, including enabling pupils from Brookfield School to access the climbing wall and canoeing, and of course many of the people carrying out this work are volunteers.

Within Children's Services we will continue to make use of volunteers in the YOT and the Youth Service, and we do not envisage the savings will impact on this in the foreseeable future.

**The Chairman asked:** *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question a supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

**Mrs Maryanne Thomas asked the following supplementary question:**

*“The concern is regarding particularly the vulnerable young people who are currently accessing things like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and various other things that are at jeopardy if the budget for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is cut completely. I just wondered whether, particularly to the areas that concern the vulnerable people, this is actually going to be continued”.*

**The Executive Member for Children and Young People, Youth Service, Education answered:**

I've partly answered that question, but anything around the DofE is not within my portfolio, if that's what you're requiring an answer to then I will have to get a written answer.

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The following written response was sent to Mrs Thomas after the meeting:

“The Council has had to make some very difficult decisions to make savings in its budget and I would therefore confirm that it is intended to implement this saving i.e. to withdraw funding which supports the West Berkshire DoE award scheme.

However I do understand the potential impact this saving may have, accordingly the initial intention for this saving proposal was to look for an alternative method of delivery, but at zero cost to the Council. Discussions with interested parties have begun in this respect and these will continue.”

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## **Members’ Questions as specified in the Council’s Procedure Rules of the Constitution**

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There were no questions from Members.

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