

Savings Proposal 2015/16: overview and recommendations - Reshaping the Integrated Youth Support Service (Saving Line reference 11a, Appendix C 1a)

Overview of responses and recommendations: Reshaping the Integrated Youth Support Service		Mark Evans, Head of Children's Services	
Proposal:	The council is proposing saving £297,000 from the budget from Integrated Youth Support Services. The overall impact of these proposals will mean that the council will do less direct work with a range of young people. Instead the retained services will be focused on those young people in the most need.	Proposed reduction in funding:	£297,000
Nos of responses:	<p>69 responses were received;, one from a councillor and 18 from organisations.</p> <p>11 affected groups, involving 61 young people, were attended to ascertain their views.</p> <p>7 meetings took place with organisations or individuals.</p> <p>Two petitions were received. One with 97 signatures and 36 comments and the other petition with 137 signatures both calling on the council to stop the cuts.</p>		
Key issues raised:	<p>Young people who used the services were unanimous that services should be retained unchanged. They clearly expressed that the services they accessed were valued, appreciated and in many cases had made very significant impact on their lives. Organisations and parents also reported the significant impact the services made. The verbatim comments from young people present a powerful narrative of the impact these services have made. In addition the two petitions also called on the Local Authority to stop cutting the services.</p> <p>There was a strongly expressed view, that if preventative services were cut, there may be a short term financial benefit, however the long term impact on young peoples lives and the consequential costs to the authority, and state more widely, would far outweigh the savings realised in the short term. There was a concern that a gap may develop for young people who have problems and difficulties but whose problems are not considered significant enough to meet the threshold for a service. Thereby inadvertently increasing the likelihood of further negative life experiences to attain a service.</p> <p>Concern was expressed that the intrinsic nature, ethos and value of youth work may be lost in the reductions in capacity. In addition the council would lose its ability to respond to developing issues and concerns with a smaller pool of appropriately trained staff.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>It is noted that by its nature, this proposal would affect young people who may be considered more vulnerable. There are a number of groups of young people who would be adversely affected by the reductions in service; some of these can be mitigated against. An Equality Impact assessment has been conducted in relation to the proposal.</p>		

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Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response
	A number suggested that the council find other means of generating income or increasing council tax	The council has already absorbed a lot of the savings by cutting back on administration, changed the way a number of services are provided. Although we will continue to do this, given the scale of savings required moving forward, reduced spending on services people use and will notice can no longer be avoided.
	Create buy back opportunities for schools to purchase services directly	Buy back arrangements are being created to allow schools to buy a bespoke service to meet the needs of those Schools or Pupil Referral Units (PRUs).
	More collaboration and coordination with both statutory and voluntary organisations	IYSS is keen to continue to work closely with colleagues in statutory services and others in the best interest of young people.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Reduce the capacity of some of the areas being retained to enable the groups that are being cut to be sustained but with a reduced capacity.	This calculation has already been made, by reducing the number of staff available to facilitate the groups there is not the ability to reduce further without compromising what is delivered.
	Put the services under threat out to tender to see if private, voluntary or community sector is able to deliver the services in a more cost effective way.	The remaining focus of the work of IYSS is on the most complex and vulnerable young people, this requires a well trained and professional workforce, therefore the remaining resources allocated to IYSS are likely to be used to employ those staff to deliver services. At present there is no scope for grant making provision within the budget.
	Retain the Job Club for NEET young people for a further year	Three different organisations have expressed an interest in facilitating such a service therefore discussions will take place to explore this opportunity
	Proposal that the LAC residentials are replaced with day trips for LAC young people	The social work teams who are responsible for the young people and commission the LAC residentials consider a residential rather than day trips is the most effective means of delivering the desired outcomes for LAC young people.
	Proposal that the older group for children with	The younger SEND group is jointly run with a local special school, they have taken the

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	Special Educational Needs is retained, whilst the special schools in the area are approached to take on the school age SEND group	decision to discontinue their involvement with the group and focus their resources in a different manner. In regards to the older SEND group, there is already provision for adults with special educational needs. Discussions are taking place regarding provision of services for young adults who have learning difficulties through the Adult Social Care Voluntary Sector Prospectus
	Youth Workers could be placed in schools, Family Resource Service or Social work teams, with the costs being born by those teams.	The budget from the whole of Children's Services is constrained therefore the costs cannot be borne by another team within Children's Services.
	Is there an opportunity for the local authority to provide the facilities/buildings for others to undertake the activities?	There are discussions taking place with community and voluntary sector groups regarding the use of both of the Youth Centres with a view to dramatically increasing the opportunities for use of those buildings.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	<p>Young people who used the services repeatedly indicated that they were willing to assist in keeping the provision open, as did other individuals.</p> <p>A number of organisations expressed a willingness to be involved in different aspects of service provision including ; School Nurses regarding Sexual Health Zones, Home Start West Berkshire in regards to Teenage Parents group, Newbury YMCA in relation to the Job Club, WBTC regarding the Job Club, Berkshire Youth more generally, Thatcham Youth in relation to Moorside Centre, Greenham Youth and Community Project in relation to general youth provision and detached provision in Newbury and Cultural Services regarding one off projects.</p>	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>The response to the consultation includes a strong set of points about the potential impacts of cuts to prevention services for young people. These comments are valid and we recognise that the impact of cutting these services has the potential to have negative outcomes for some children and young people.</p> <p>There are a number of suggestions put forward for specific solutions and ways forward to address services that may close, which involve the community, voluntary and private sector partners. Discussions are already taking place with some of those groups and may continue to mitigate the impact of the savings required.</p> <p>There are suggestions regarding alternative funding or different budgets that could be used. These options have been explored, there is some scope for buy back arrangements and for alternative commissioning, however the budget reductions are required.</p>	

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	<p>There are a number of specific suggestions about the configuration of services going forward for example collaboration with statutory services or voluntary sector, a drop in service, streamlining of services etc. These suggestions will be taken forward as part of the detailed planning of the work of IYSS.</p> <p>The suggestion that consideration be given to developing new models of provision working with the private, voluntary and community sector will be pursued.</p> <p>The proposal that the funding relating to the older group for children with Special Educational Needs is retained cannot be supported , as the special schools which support this activity have taken the decision to discontinue the group and focus their resources in a different manner.</p> <p>The proposal that Schools, and Pupil Referral Units pay for the Connexions Intensive Services they receive by using the pupil premium is progressing.</p> <p>There are discussions taking place with community and voluntary sector groups regarding the use of both of the Youth Centres with a view to increasing the activities and opportunities for use of those buildings increasing the opportunities for use of those buildings.</p> <p>The consultation has elicited many offers of help and support ranging from individuals and groups of young people to organisations including Home Start West Berkshire, Berkshire Youth, Thatcham Youth, School Nurses, WBTC, Newbury YMCA and others. These offers of help and support will be followed up..</p>
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	<p>The feedback has highlighted opportunities and a willingness for new partnerships to be established as a means delivering services in the future. However, the consultation has not provided any compelling evidence of why the proposals should not be taken forward.</p>