

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 16 January 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Education & Social Care

SUBJECT: Integrated, Universal, Targeted and Specialist Youth Provision post July 2020

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 It has been agreed that the integrated universal and targeted youth provision contract and the separate specialist treatment contracts be commissioned as one contract. Confirmation is now sought to start procurement process.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and**
- 2) agree that if the procurement of the new integrated, universal, targeted and specialist youth provision is approved, it will agree a three year contract with the option to extend for a further 1 plus 1 year.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 National Picture of Youth Provision

3.1.1 Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 published in March 2008, sets out the statutory requirements for local authorities to provide youth work in three areas: positive activities, decision making by young people and 14-19 learning.

3.1.2 An estimated £387m has been cut from youth service spending by local authorities in the last six years, research has found. Data compiled by Unison from 180 local authorities that provide youth services in the UK found that in 2014/15 and 2015/16 cuts amounted to £123m.

3.1.3 The continued reduction in youth services has come at a time when those services are most needed. The risk of child poverty and material deprivation in the UK at a time has risen in recent years,

and as children become young people, thousands fail to receive any kind of economic support to get into the labour market.

(In Halton more than £160,000 has been cut from the budget since 2015, which equates to 20% plus).

3.2 Current Provision

3.2.1 Halton has a long history of providing universal, targeted and specialist youth provision, that provides young people with opportunities to develop their own unique talents and be able to access early help with any problems.

3.2.2 The Halton vision in 2015 was to develop a high quality integrated youth provision that meet the needs of young people and their families, with a focus on narrowing the gap in positive outcomes for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, while improving outcomes for all young people.

3.2.3 In recent years Halton Borough Council with the support of youth provision and other partners (e.g. police, sexual health services) have made excellent progress in reducing teenage conceptions, under 18 alcohol related hospital admissions and youth related anti-social behaviour. However we are still above the National and North West averages for teenage conceptions and drug related hospital admissions for under 25's.

3.2.4 Halton Youth Provision has also further developed and increased the number of young people engaging and completing the Mayor's Award and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Both these awards were described by the Care Quality Commission in December 2016 as outstanding, along with the joint initiatives between the youth provision, police and housing departments around preventing anti-social behaviour. In 2016 the Quality Care Commission also rated Halton Youth Provision as outstanding, in the work it carries out in schools and colleges and the work it does to support those young people with additional needs.

3.2.5 The youth provision works together with a range of agencies to help young people who are taking risks or experiencing difficulties in getting back on the right path. Through early help or the early identification of an issue, they offer a range of support to prevent problems from getting worse: For example :

- Health and emotional wellbeing support e.g. confidence building, self-esteem anger management.
- Risk taking behaviour including sex, drugs and alcohol.
- One to one support for children and young people affected by parental substance misuse and/or mental health issues.

- Sexual health advice, contraception and STI screening.
- Promoting positive relationships.
- Diversion from crime and anti-social behaviour (eg. Knife crime).
- Staying safe, including internet and social media safety.
- Support to encourage volunteering and active citizenship.
- Signposting to find work, education and training opportunities.

3.3 **Detail of demographics – etc.**

There are 15,200 young people (10-19) in Halton, 7,800 males and 7,400 females (2018 info). The split between Runcorn and Widnes is 7,730 for Runcorn and 7,120 for Widnes (2017 info).

4.0 **SUMMARY**

- 4.1 Halton Borough Council is proud of its history in maintaining innovative, exciting, experienced and suitably qualified provider/s to deliver its youth provision.
- 4.2 Provision will continue to be provided through centre based clubs, group work, 1-1 treatment, street based outreach teams and it will continue to include the delivery of the Halton Mayors award and the Duke of Edinburgh awards, in partnership with schools, youth clubs and community groups.
- 4.3 The ambition is to build stronger, safer communities, which are able to support the development and learning of children and young people, so they grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and healthy and ready to be part of Halton's present and future.
- 4.4 To ensure that resources are targeted effectively and they meet the needs of young people in Halton, the provider/s will offer the service in the areas where there is a greater need. Provision will be delivered in the right place and at the right time for young people, so they can access universal, targeted or specialist services when appropriate.
- 4.5 Services will be rooted in strengths, or an asset-based approach that in addition to delivering interventions focused on reducing risk taking behaviour, also develop young people's resilience, such as life skills and their ability to make better choices and deal with difficulties
- 4.6 The Integrated Youth Service will have 3 core functions. The three areas of support have an indicative budget of £633.527 per annum, split as outlined below:-
- 70% of the budget will be focused on universal activities and targeted early interventions, provided through youth clubs, Halton Mayors Award, Duke of Edinburgh awards, street

based outreach and targeted one to one sessions in community venues e.g. schools and colleges.

- 30% of the budget will be focused on providing specialist support/treatment for those young people whose risk taking behaviour is impacting on their health, education, family and their long term chances in life.

These are indicative only and will change if needed through discussion with the Provider and the Commissioner of the service.

It is proposed the contract will start on 1st August 2020.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The most relevant statutory duty relating to youth services is the duty to secure access to positive activities. Under section 507B inserted into the Education Act 1996 by virtue of section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the duty requires Local Authorities to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that young people have access to sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and personal and social development.
- 5.2 This includes sufficient facilities for such activities; that activities are publicised; and that young people are placed at the heart of decision making regarding the positive activity provision. The duty applies to the 13 – 19 age range, and up to 24 for young people with learning difficulties.
- 5.3 The duty is qualified by the term 'reasonably practicable' which means that the determination of whether the local authority is acting reasonably depends on the particular circumstances of the local authority and the particular requirement for access to such activities and facilities. It is important for local authorities to document their consideration of need and any decisions made on the grounds of what is judged to be 'reasonably practicable'. By doing so, the authority will be able to provide a rationale for its decision making, if challenged.
- 5.4 Positive activities are split into two forms of activity; educational leisure time activities and recreational leisure time activities. The two are not mutually exclusive and many activities can fall in the remit of both. The positive activities to which access is to be secured need not always be in the local authority's area and the duty allows local authorities to enter into cross-border co-operative arrangements in order to meet the needs of young people who must travel to specific provision, or who live on, or near the borders of different local authority areas.

5.5 There is no enforceable statutory guidance on the level of provision of youth services, however if local authorities did not meet their statutory duties, they could be challenged through judicial review.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The budget would need to continue to provide integrated, specialist and targeted provision at the current level. The total budget is £633.527

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The current provision provides an integrated universal and targeted provision and a standalone specialist treatment/support service for young people in various locations across Halton, which allows for improved access in key areas of need, as reported by our partners such as the Police, Public Health and Housing.

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

This provision will support Halton Council in raising young peoples' aspirations and drive up participation and attainment in learning. The provision also supports young people who are NEET to get back into education training and employment

7.3 A Healthy Halton

This provision will target identified wards in Halton and promote positive emotional and physical wellbeing to children and young people aged 10yrs to 19yrs and up to 25 for young people with additional needs or leaving care. It will pro-actively target the young people most vulnerable to future risk taking behaviour (e.g. Drug and alcohol use, anti-social behaviour and exploitation).

7.4 A Safer Halton

This provision allows Halton the opportunity to continue using information, data, local intelligence and detailed demographic information to targeted area of greatest need with regards to reducing youth related anti-social behaviour, teenage conceptions and substance misuse.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The benefits that universal, specialist and targeted youth provision provides for young people are long-lasting. While many other public services step in when problems occur, universal and targeted youth

services can prevent so many of those difficulties from occurring in the first place.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The Equality Act 2010 extended legal protection to groups with 'protected characteristics'. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Halton Borough Council is a public body within the meaning of the act and must therefore pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the act
- advance equality of opportunity between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not
- foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who don't

Halton Borough Council aims to ensure that services available at all levels, reflect the diversity of the people they serve.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None