

Youth Services

Scrutiny Challenge Session Report



TOWER HAMLETS

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

March 2017

Chair's Foreword

Tower Hamlets' youth service has had an extremely rocky ride over the past few years following allegations that council resource had been seriously misused. The workforce is demotivated, user numbers have been declining and the residential population has lost confidence in the council's ability to engage our borough's young people in a positive and purposeful way.

The youth service has also been delivering poor value for money, with £1031 spent on each person with which the youth service has come into contact, equivalent to £278.59 per head of the total 13 to 19 population - significantly higher than the per head cost in comparable boroughs such as Greenwich (£56.42), Lambeth (£147.51) and Southwark (£81.55). The council has also failed to meet even halfway its own targets on annual contacts, which in 2015/16 stood at only 6790 against a target of 13 782. We must now start demanding far more robust outcomes for this cost outlay, and from the youth service's 171 employees.

In July 2016, an interim delivery model was put in place in order to address the challenges facing the youth service. This saw the closure of eighteen of the borough's twenty-six youth venues, with the remaining eight turned into youth hubs. The Cabinet subsequently agreed in January 2017 to restructure the youth service using this hub-based model alongside a 'mixed economy' of services – some internally delivered, others provided by external partners.

My scrutiny of the youth service aimed to establish a sense of whether the borough has properly learned the lessons from previous shortcomings in service delivery and whether the interim model and new organisational structure are likely to provide the right service for our young people and for residents.

The engagement of external partners, service users and councillors in this exercise was unfortunately relatively limited and it should therefore be borne in mind that the recommendations in this report are not based on as comprehensive a picture of current services as I would have liked. Nonetheless, I wish to thank those partners who did engage with the Challenge Session – it was an interesting, enlightening discussion, conducted in a constructive spirit uncharacteristic of full council debates on the youth service.

I should also like to thank Ronke and Claire, the two officers who are leading the youth service reforms. Both have a genuine desire to make ours the best youth service in the capital, and have expertise from their work in other boroughs to impart. Theirs are ambitious aims and I dearly hope they succeed in fulfilling them. Insofar as I may offer a recommendation to the council's leadership, it would be to empower them to be as bold and user-focused as they would like to be. The greatest risk, as I see it, is that Tower Hamlets orthodoxy will take hold and the council will continue to spend huge resource in areas which do not deliver the most positive outcomes to service users. Indeed I was struck by the observation of one Labour councillor, with many years' experience in the borough, that 'we all

know the youth service has been a mess for thirty years'. It would be a terrible shame for this mess to continue when the ingredients are in place for substantial improvement to take hold.

The council leadership has made its decision on which service model to pursue and the recommendations of this report therefore sit within those parameters. However had those parameters not been in place, I would have liked to recommend a sea change in approach in which the borough offers a much more targeted service to those young people in the borough who would benefit the most from a tailored programme of mentorship and support while external partners, currently operating very successfully within the borough, could aim to fulfil the universal service that Tower Hamlets wishes to offer all young people. Many external providers run extremely well-attended, enriching youth sessions while the council's own youth centres sit empty. I would also like to see much more robust outreach work that makes contact with those young people persistently behaving in an anti-social way. We must end the culture which sees youth workers sit idly in empty centres while our young people, only a stone's throw away, smoke drugs and drink alcohol for want of better things to do.

I wish the council the very best in turning around the youth service in the years ahead and hope that this report proves a constructive contribution to that process.

Cllr Julia Dockerill

St Katharine's & Wapping (Conservative), Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The youth service should work with other Council departments, as well as other public and private sector employers, to take best advantage of potential apprenticeships as a means of offering work experience and career opportunities for all youth service users.

Recommendation 2: The youth service to work with the community and voluntary sector to develop a new performance and outcomes framework, that is aligned to the wider directorate and corporate frameworks, that includes activity, input, output, outcome and impact indicators; and which is more nuanced to the communities in which young people live and where youth activity is delivered.

Recommendation 3: The youth service should, as part of its regular consultation activity, ensure that the opinions and preferences of female service users are proactively sought.

Recommendation 4: Following implementation of the youth service's new organisational model (and within a year) convene a focus group of service users to assess the impact of changes to the service with a view to them reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation 5: The youth service should work with its own internal youth workers, commissioned youth activity providers and independent youth activity providers to produce a joint timetable of youth activity for the benefit of Tower Hamlets' young people.

Recommendation 6: The youth service should ensure that all mainstream and commissioned provision of youth activity and services is appropriately connected, through referral mechanisms and relevant fora, to the services supporting vulnerable children and families e.g. early help services and social care.

Recommendation 7: The youth service should build on the successful pilot of joint-working between the Police, the Council's Rapid Response Team and commissioned providers or Council youth workers, and have a more direct role in the Anti-Social Behaviour tasking group.

Recommendation 8: The youth service should explore alternative funding sources to supplement the existing resources available in order further develop facilities and expand its offer to young people.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The challenge session was carried out in the context of an ongoing consultation on a proposed reorganisation of the Integrated Youth and Community Service (“the youth service”).
- 1.2 The challenge session was prompted by concerns about whether the significant changes made to the youth service (i.e. the interim delivery model put in place from July 2016) and the larger changes to come as a result of service review and reorganisation, adequately address the “lessons learned” from previous shortcomings in service delivery and provide the right service for local young people.
- 1.3 The challenge session aimed to ensure that the future plans for the youth service have properly absorbed “lessons learned” from past work and have explored innovative approaches to achieving desired outcomes. Three main areas of focus during the challenge session were:
- the resilience of the service,
 - the staffing of the service, and
 - the approach to outreach.
- 1.4 The investigations and reviews carried out by and into the youth service identified a range of practice issues that required addressing. These ranged from very serious allegations of fraud and malpractice to poor communication and engagement of young people in the borough.
- 1.5 A number of these practice issues were discussed during the challenge session in addition to other related topics. The sections below set out the practice issues, lessons learned, and summary of discussion in relation to them, and recommendations arising from this.

1.6 The challenge session was held on 10th March 2.30pm-5.00pm and chaired by Cllr Julia Dockerill.

1.7 Members that were present at the session were:

Cllr. Julia Dockerill (Chair)	St Katharine's & Wapping (Conservative), Scrutiny Lead for Children's Services
Cllr. Peter Golds	Island Gardens (Conservative), Leader of the Conservative Group
Councillor Andrew Wood	Canary Wharf Ward (Conservative), Chair of Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Planning Forum

1.8 The session was supported by

James Coumbe	Community Insight Manager, Children's and Health, Adults and Community Directorates
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1.9 Evidence was received from a range of officers and experts:

Claire Belgard	Interim Head of Youth and Community Service
Ronke Martins-Taylor	Youth Service Development Manager
Dan Rose	Director (Spotlight, PoplarHARCA)
Shabbir Ahmed Chowdhury	Parent Governor, and co-opted O&S member
Rukon Hassan	Manager (Aasha Gang Mediation & Ex Offenders Programme, Osmani Trust)
David Burbage	Chair of Healthwatch, and co-opted O&S member)

2. National and Local Context

2.1 The table below sets out a timeline of events relevant to services and this challenge session

Month/Year	Activity/Event
January 2016	Service User / Public Consultation begins
February 2016	
March 2016	First survey consultation exercise
April 2016	Youth Services moves to Children Services directorate
May 2016	
June 2016	
July 2016	Interim delivery model implemented
August 2016	
September 2016	
October 2016	Second survey consultation exercise
November 2016	
December 2016	
January 2017	Cabinet report on “Youth Service Review” sets out recommended option and case for change. Cabinet agrees option to move to a “hub based” model for future delivery.
January 2017	Staff Consultation carried out
February 2017	
March 2017	10 th March – Youth Services Challenge Session
April 2017	
May 2017	
June 2017	Planned implementation of new structure for youth services

2.2 The work of the youth service is underpinned by statutory duties set out in the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Skills Act 2008. The youth service provides informal education opportunities and positive activities to young people aged 13 – 19 and up to age 25 if they have a disability.

2.3 In July 2016 the youth service began delivering a temporary “interim delivery model” (see Appendix 1 for the youth service structure) in response to operational pressures arising from performance and practice issues. Through a network of 16 youth service run youth centres and commissioned youth activity providers this interim model provided:

- Universal services: Delivered from eight local authority run youth centres;
- Commissioned youth activity: Delivered by voluntary sector organisations on behalf of the youth service. Poplar Harca, Newark Youth, Osmani Trust, Ocean Youth Connexions and Society Links deliver from 8 centres offering:
 - universal youth activity,
 - drop-in information support sessions,
 - personal planning sessions,
 - access sporting activities,
 - leisure activities,
 - arts, crafts and music activities,
 - and themed youth activity programmes lasting circa 6 weeks.
- Targeted Youth Support: This provides provided information and advice to vulnerable young people;
- Peer Education: This provides provided sexual relationship education in schools, and supports the Young Mayor and the Youth Council;
- Core business support: including administration, apprentice/volunteer co-ordination, quality assurance, service development, training and senior management;
- Service Level Agreements: which are maintained with organisations for the delivery of specialist youth activity in sailing, the arts, volunteering and for the provision of youth activity for young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered (LGBT).

2.4 As at October 2016 there were circa 171 staff, by head count, employed in the youth service which is equivalent to 93.2 full-time equivalent staff. Appendix 1 shows the structure of the interim delivery model.

2.5 The interim delivery model is a short-term response to the need to address performance issues in the youth services. A longer-term restructuring of the

service was also considered necessary because of service-wide performance issues, and the need to ensure that long term changes are made to address the significant issues that had emerged through investigations into the service. The restructuring of the service would also create a financially viable model for the longer term, in the context of reducing council budgets. The performance issues are set out in more detail below.

- 2.5.1 Over the last 3 years the youth service has struggled to achieve its performance targets, particularly for contact and participation. The decline in contact numbers highlights the struggle that the service has had in attracting young people to attend youth activities which indicates a poor programme offer or poor local youth work practice.
- 2.5.2 Workforce reform and service restructure offers both an opportunity to deliver a better quality of service and to attract staff into newly created full-time roles. It also offers the opportunity to address long standing workforce equality issues which are believed to be directly linked to the lack of diversity in young people that the service attracts.
- 2.5.3 The youth service has had a complex history of investigations into serious matters which have resulted in operational pressures that have impacted on service delivery from youth centres. These operational pressures resulted in the service needing to change the way activity was delivered from youth centres as young people were faced with ad hoc youth centre closures and poor programme delivery.
- 2.5.4 The Council has made a strong commitment to take action (including legal action where necessary) against individuals who have, or are believed to have, contributed to wide scale malpractice within the youth service. It should be noted that there is no evidence that all staff members in the youth service have been involved in this malpractice and it is clear that in some cases malpractice has been facilitated by weak management controls and

ineffective corporate processes which are a wider corporate issue. Whilst individuals are being dealt with there is a fundamental issue with the underlying culture within the youth service which cannot be eradicated by removing a few individuals.

2.6 In January 2016 the Council began a review of the youth service to address these issues and to ensure that it understands service user priorities. Consultation events were held in order to identify a clear set of priorities for the service to underpin future service delivery and transformation. See consultation reports at Appendix 2. The service priorities identified through consultation, and underpinning the review, are set out below:

- Priority 1 – Promote youth participation and engagement
- Priority 2 – Deliver high quality youth programmes
- Priority 3 – Develop youth centre building standards
- Priority 4 – Publicise the youth offer
- Priority 5 – Improve partnership working
- Priority 6 – Commission community and voluntary sector organisations to deliver youth activity in places where the youth service doesn't

2.7 The delivery of a restructured and transformed youth service is intended to ensure the Council provides the highest quality services for young people so that it can deliver on its broader ambitions for children and young people as articulated in its strategic plans:

- Strategic Plan (2016-2019) Priority 1 - to create opportunity by supporting aspiration and tackling poverty thus enabling young people to realise their potential.
- Children and Families Plan (2016 – 2018) has the following youth-related priorities:
 - To provide support to vulnerable children and young people and those that have extra caring responsibilities, e.g. for a parent or relative, so that they can engage in positive activities;

- To provide enjoyable, engaging, positive activities which children and young people can access after school in an informal education setting in order to support their achievement and aspirations;
- To ensure that as part of the youth service review the views of children and young people are taken into account and acted upon;
- To ensure that information is available on the range of positive activities, “the youth offer”, that children and young people can participate in.

2.8 In January 2017, Cabinet agreed a proposal to restructure the youth service using hub based model, and a mixed economy of internally delivered services and externally commissioned services, that would:

- lead to reduced layers of management;
- prioritise professional, frontline youth workers who are located in youth centre hubs;
- focus on supporting vulnerable young people;
- offer commissioned youth activities;
- provide central support functions; and
- deliver integrated working.

2.9 The hub model of delivery will feature a larger proportion of full-time youth service staff, enabling staff to have time to properly plan, record and deliver activities, and for the service generally to be better placed to meet the priorities identified through consultation.

2.10 The staff consultation on these changes concluded on 9th March, It was therefore hoped, subject to due process around restructures, that the new service would be implemented by end of June 2017. The commencement date for the new service will depend on finding mutually acceptable concessions to any Union-led “failures to agree”.

3. Key Findings and Recommendations

3.1 Practice issue: failure to effectively represent the needs of female service users and staff

3.1.1 Lessons learned:

- Develop an attractive youth offer
- Develop youth outreach work
- Develop a core youth service staff training programme
- Promote career opportunities
- Recruitment and selection processes

3.1.2 It was discussed that historically there had been low numbers of female service users and female staff within the youth service. At the time of the challenge session 33% of the staff were female; only 28% of those responding to the March to April 2016 youth service review consultation (see appendix 2) user consultation were female. However, 45% of young people who responded to the October to November 2016 youth service review consultation were female.

3.1.3 The youth service understands, through its two consultation exercises and from other evidence, that male and female service users want different things from the youth service. In general, girls tend to be more career or academically focussed.

3.1.4 Furthermore, it is recognised that engaging with girls and encouraging their interaction with the youth service is more challenging, they are less likely in general to “walk in” to a youth service centre or hub; and therefore targeted outreach activity and/or a very clear and well communicated offer is needed to encourage take up and participation.

3.1.5 A revised staff training offer intended to address how best to encourage participation by girls was delayed to allow for current restructure process to conclude. It is anticipated that the restructure could result in staffing changes, and therefore the delay is intended to make sure that training is delivered to staff who will be part of the long term changes being made to the youth service, and part of its new, more full time workforce.

3.1.6 It is not necessarily anticipated that the post-restructure workforce will be more evenly balanced in terms of gender. Therefore, there may be an ongoing need for more external recruitment to encourage a better mix between male and female staff.

3.1.7 As part of the ambition to promote career opportunities to encourage female participation in youth service activities, it was noted that the new Government push to increase the number of apprenticeships being offered presented a good opportunity for the youth service to support more career-focussed young women to obtain useful employment experience and development opportunities.

3.1.8 *Recommendation 1: the youth service should work with other Council departments, as well as other public and private sector employers, to take best advantage of potential apprenticeships as a means of offering opportunities for all youth service users.*

3.2 Practice issues: Fraud and other serious investigations; staff failing to declare their interests in organisations requesting grants/funding from the IYCS; poor management and oversight of IYCS staff; and failure to carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on some IYCS staff.

3.2.1 Lessons learned:

- Develop new recruitment and selection processes
- Development of a new youth service employee code of conduct
- Hold staff to account using supervision and appraisal processes
- Create new job descriptions and person specifications for the new youth service structure
- Carry out DBS checks

3.2.2 The session discussed the outcome of previous investigations into youth service employees. In particular, issues relating to the misuse of payment cards by some youth service employees.

3.2.3 It was noted that the police did not take forward a number of proceedings, as the Police believed that Council rules around payment cards were not tight enough to bring criminal proceedings. Since then, the youth service has worked with HR/finance colleagues to tighten internal controls. An internal audit has been carried out on purchase card use, which has identified that certain Council policies need to be revised.

3.2.4 Internally, Council disciplinary procedures were taken forward. A panel was established, which identified individuals, and worked through the disciplinary process.

3.2.5 In the youth services payment card use has been reduced and new limits and controls have been applied with any spend over £100 checked off by a

manager. Better planning and procurement arrangements have also been put in place.

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3.3 Practice issue: Failure to deliver universal youth work to performance targets or service plans

3.3.1 Lessons learned:

- Implement robust Quality Assurance processes
- There is a need to professionalise the job of a youth worker. It needs to be about more than just holding a youth work degree, with softer skills developed as part of employees' development.

3.3.2 There was a wide ranging discussion about the role and purpose of the youth service. Based on the outcomes of consultation and review, the youth service stated that it wants to:

- Empower young people to realise their best potential;
- Provide opportunities for young people's personal and social development;
- Ensure that there is sufficient, high quality, leisure and informal educational courses and activity
- Maximise the participation of young people in the Service.

3.3.3 Historic performance was presented as low in relation to contacts¹ and participation². Contacts have reduced from 9,479 in 2013/14 to 6,790 in 2015/16 (against an annual target of 13,732), and for 2016/17 (as at December 2016) there had only been 3,094 contacts.

3.3.4 Participant numbers have reduced on a similar scale, from 6,167 in 2013/14 to 4,172 2015/16. It is however, only more recently that outcome measures³ have significantly deteriorated.

¹ A Contact is made with any young person who is registered at a youth centre and attends an additional youth activity programme session for the first time.

² A participant is a young person who attends five additional youth activity programme sessions.

³ A recorded outcome refers to the course or one off programme of training from which the young person obtains a certificate, An accredited outcome refers to the programme or course of activity undertaken by a young person that is subject to either independent internal verification by awarding organisation or that is externally assessed by an awarding body.

Tower Hamlets youth service 3 year performance									
	2013/14			2014/2015			2015/2016		
	Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved		Target	Achieved	
		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Contacts	12,393	9,479	76.5%	13,446	8,992	66.9%	13,782	6,790	49.3%
Participants	6,866	6,167	89.8%	7,695	5,844	76.0%	7,868	4,172	53.0%
Recorded Outcome	4,120	3,998	97.0%	4,158	3,282	78.9%	5,027	2,460	49.9%
Certified Outcome	1,426	1,744	122.3%	1,595	1,716	107.6%	1,631	1,083	66.4%
Accredited Outcome	715	1,349	188.7%	851	845	99.3%	868	665	76.6%

3.3.5 In relation to participation, it was noted that typically a youth service would seek to target approximately 30% of the 13 to 19 age population. Furthermore, despite the ambition to maximise participation of young people, there was general agreement that the job of youth services and youth workers in future could not simply be to “chase the numbers” in terms of contact/participation figures for young people. As a performance measure in isolation, the number of contacts has little to do with the overall quality of the service being provided, and can lead to counter-productive activities, i.e. competition between in-house youth service providers and other providers in the marketplace catering to similar needs.

3.3.6 It was noted that there was a good relationship between in-house youth services and the five commissioned providers now delivering services under the interim delivery model. Youth services management are clear that the future operating model for the youth service will be much more orientated to monitoring the progression and achievements of young people in terms of outcomes that meet their individual needs.

3.3.7 To this end, youth services are exploring the options for a suitable outcomes / performance framework which can provide the right incentives to the service and its staff to deliver the desired impacts and outcomes for young people. They are seeking to:

- Co-produce with commissioned providers and youth service users
- Capture added value by taking into account additional resources that the sector can lever into the youth service
- Create a framework that provides information on both inputs and activities, as well as outcomes and impacts

3.3.8 Recommendation 2: The youth service to work with the community and voluntary sector to develop a new performance and outcomes framework, that is aligned to the wider directorate and corporate frameworks, that includes activity, input, output, outcome and impact indicators; and which is more nuanced to the communities in which young people live and where youth activity is delivered.

3.3.9 Recommendation 3: The youth service should, as part of its regular consultation activity ensure that the opinions and preferences of female service users are proactively sought.

3.3.10 Recommendation 4: At a suitable point following implementation of the new youth service hub based delivery model (and within a year) a focus group of service users should be convened to assess the impact of changes to the service. The focus group should report back to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3.4 **Practice issue: Failure to work with partners on shared objectives and/or projects targeted at young people**

3.4.1 Lessons learned:

- Develop collaborative and partnership working

3.4.2 It was noted, by the representatives of the current commissioned providers who attended the challenge session, that in some respects, this “challenge” comes too late, given that under the interim delivery model the current youth service management team are seen to be doing good work, and providers are being actively listened to.

3.4.3 There is considered to be a strong market in youth provision in the borough, with much youth activity ongoing which is independent of local authority direction and funding. For example, Spotlight has a history of delivering youth services for Poplar Harca. In addition to this it has seen 400 young people as part of its contract with the youth service commissioned by Tower Hamlets. However, but it expects to see 2,500 a year overall as part of a wider set of youth activities funded from a range of different sources. Spotlight has a diverse creative arts and sports offer for young people, and some 4,000 members.

3.4.4 It was felt that the mixed economy approach, which sees the youth service using both internally delivered youth activity as well as externally commissioned youth activity providers, offers stability, particularly during a time of further change for the Council’s youth services as they plan a transition from the current interim delivery model to the future permanent structure.

3.4.5 It was recognised that there is a range of other, independent youth activity providers in the borough who are not commissioned directly by youth service, and who could provide useful resources for young people in Tower

Hamlets. Uniformed organisations such as the Scouts and Cadets are very established.

3.4.6 Recommendation 5: *The youth service should work with its own internal youth workers, commissioned youth activity providers and independent youth activity providers to produce a joint timetable of youth activity for the benefit of Tower Hamlets' young people.*

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3.5 Practice issue: Integration of work with vulnerable groups of young people

3.5.1 Lessons learned

- Ensure the integration of vulnerable groups into universal youth settings

3.5.2 For 2016/17 the youth service has a number of Service Level Agreements in place with organisations for the delivery of specialist youth activity, which includes young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered (LGBT). It remains a longer term aspiration to more fully integrate provision of these vulnerable groups within universal youth hub settings.

3.5.3 The youth service provides additional targeted support aimed at more vulnerable young people who have specific risk factors such as those who are not in education, employment or training, who are at risk of involvement in crime or antisocial behaviour or who are at risk of exclusion.

3.5.4 Both commissioned providers in attendance at the challenge session highlighted the high levels of vulnerability that their staff had identified in some of the young people who they were engaging with. In particular, the risk of child sexual exploitation for girls, especially through social media, was considered to be a very serious issue. The commissioned providers had responded by seeking expert assistance from NSPCC & Docklands Outreach.

3.5.5 As a result of the increasing prevalence of such issues the role of the youth worker, was considered to be changing in response to the changing needs of young people. Youth workers were increasingly dealing with issues more aligned to those touched by social work. There was a consensus that in the light of these changes youth workers would benefit from specific training in order to equip them to undertake their role in a changing more integrated professional climate.

3.5.6 The question of “what is a youth worker?” was considered in its historical context. Those attending the challenge session articulated the view that *youth work became specialised towards anti-social behaviour as previous national priorities drove funding and targets*. Whilst it is not evident that there is a clear national vision for the alternative, it was considered possible for youth workers to fulfil a broader role.

3.5.7 The youth service is keen to work in partnership with other teams across the Council, including the Early Help Hub, Children’s Social Care and the Youth Offending Service.

3.5.8 *Recommendation 6: The youth service to ensure that all mainstream and commissioned provision of youth services is appropriately connected through referral mechanisms and relevant fora to the services supporting vulnerable children and families e.g. early help services and social care.*

3.6 **General discussion regarding outreach activities and anti-social behaviour**

- 3.6.1 The challenge session made a distinction between “outreach” youth activity and “detached” youth work. “Outreach” was defined as youth workers coming out from a community/youth centre hub into the immediate surrounding area in order to support and encourage young people in the vicinity to use the community/youth centre hub; whilst “detached” youth work was defined as youth work that was substantively practiced in a street based setting with no expectation that the young people encountered would use the facilities of a community/ youth centre hub.
- 3.6.2 The role of the youth service in disrupting behaviour considered to be anti-social by local residents was discussed. It was noted that particularly in the summer, complaints from local residents about young people “hanging out” increase, and that some kind of outreach activity or detached youth activity may have a role in mitigating this problem.
- 3.6.3 It was highlighted that part of the issue was about perceptions of what constituted “young people” in the minds of residents i.e. there are young people, aged 19 or under, who fall into the target group of the youth service, and then there are young people, 20 or above who do not have a learning difficulty or disability, who are not the remit of the youth service’s work.
- 3.6.4 In relation to the former group, outreach and detached activity does take place. For example, housing associations, like Poplar Harca, use Spotlight to help identify and disrupt anti-social behaviour within the vicinity of the youth centre. Additionally, a pilot scheme took place bringing together the work of the Police, the Council’s Rapid Response Team and the Osmani Trust (a commissioned provider) which allowed for a longer presence being maintained in an identified problem area as a result. The pilot was considered successful, and the new full time contract arrangements to be implemented in youth service should make similar approaches easier to resource in future.

3.6.5 Currently, the anti-social behaviour (ASB) tasking group, meets on a monthly basis and is not considered responsive to changing needs in the borough with regard to youth ASB. It was suggested that the youth service needs to be involved in ASB tasking to take away actions. A move towards more localised Tasking (through the proposed Neighbourhood Management) model may support this.

3.6.6 *Recommendation 7: the youth service should work with Community Safety to ensure that it has a more robust role in ASB tasking.*

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3.7 General discussion around facilities and funding

3.7.1 The session discussed alternative funding options for youth services:

3.7.1.1 Public Sector Mutuals - the 10th January Cabinet report on the restructuring of the youth service assessed the creation of a public sector mutual as an alternative option. This option would have seen the creation of a youth public sector mutual or cooperative to deliver youth services on behalf of the Council. However, given the uncertain economic climate, setting up a new business to deliver youth service was deemed to be a significant risk. Ruling out a public sector mutual reduces the opportunities for access to independent income or grant funding for the youth service in the future.

3.7.1.2 Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) - SIBs were proposed as a potentially relevant vehicle for securing investment into youth services. A SIB is a public-private partnership which funds services through a performance-based contract. They are a relatively new form of investment in public services, and a relevant model would need to be found or developed for youth services.

3.7.1.3 Corporate social responsibility / partnership working – there is more that could be done to access funding from the private sector. Section 106, Community Interest Levy and other funding streams - the session was informed that there is unspent funding linked to Section 106 and Community Interest Levy agreements and asked how this could be converted into projects or better facilities to improve the youth service offer. Work is ongoing on a Community Hubs strategy – looking at how the Council uses its buildings – the youth service needs to be a part of this discussion.

3.7.2 *Recommendation 8: The youth service should explore alternative funding sources to supplement the existing resources available in order further develop facilities and expand its offer to young people.*

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Old, interim and future youth services structures

Appendix 2 – Youth Service user consultation data

Appendix 3 – Challenge Session Youth Service Presentation

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