

Towards an Integrated Youth Support Service

Report Author: Paul Senior Senior Manager: Youth Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to:

- a) inform Cabinet of the recent review of provision for young people in the City in terms of existing contracts that deliver:
 - a. Information, Advice and Guidance;
 - b. Targeted Youth Support;
 - c. Positive Activities for Young People (13-19 years of age).
- b) seek approval from Cabinet to give formal notice to existing providers of youth services that the Council, through open European Union procurement, will procure new services from 1st April 2009 that have a contract start date of 1st April 2010. In addition, all services that form an Integrated Youth Support Service will be subject to open procurement.
- c) seek approval from Cabinet to establish an Integrated Youth Support Services Commissioning Group to be chaired by the Executive Member for Children and Young People from 1st September 2008, to define the specification for a new youth service that commences on 1st April 2010. That a Youth Commissioner can be appointed by the Children and Young People's Directorate to lead the Integrated Youth Support Service Framework of activity and ensure the successful procurement of a new contract for youth services.
- d) seek approval from Cabinet to establish a multi- agency project team as a sub group of the Integrated Youth Support Service Commissioning Group. This will be to carry out an ongoing benefit/ risk/ cost appraisal, as the transition to open procurement process unfolds and that this group be lead by the proposed Youth Commissioner.

2. Background

- 2.1. Since responsibility for contracting the Connexions and Youth Support Fund Projects moved to Sheffield City Council from South Yorkshire on 1st April 2006, a number of providers have been commissioned to deliver important contracts for the Local Authority to be able to discharge its statutory duties for the providing of youth provision for young people aged 13-19. The full list of providers is shown in paragraph 6.
- 2.2. The current Youth Service contract was awarded to Sheffield Futures in 2002 for a 15-year period to 2017. In order to comply with national policy requirements and local level young people need, local youth provision and all current youth provider contract arrangements have been reviewed. A key outcome from this review has been that a number of options have been considered, with a view to determining what is the most effective and efficient approaches for securing the delivery of Integrated Youth Support Services for Sheffield City Council.

- 2.3. Recently, there has been a major national shift in youth policy, which in practical terms means moving from the current arrangements for the delivery of a range of services for young people, including the Connexions Service and Youth Service towards the delivery of an Integrated Youth Support Service.
- 2.4. This shift is also underpinned by the duties under Article 12, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The expectation here is that all services interfacing with children and young people, are expected to have in place mechanisms to enable this group to be able to contribute to the designing, development and evaluation of policy and practice. The Children and Young People Department are exploring how young people could be further involved in the proposed planning processes for the design and delivery of an Integrated Youth Support Service.
- 2.5. The Sheffield Integrated Youth Support Services Framework, forms part of the overall plans locally to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in the City.
- 2.6. Integrated Youth Support Service strands such as Targeted Youth Support will play a critical part in preventing and supporting young people at risk of forms of social and economical disadvantage due to exposure to potential challenges such as crime, drugs, teenage parenting, homelessness, alcohol misuse and low attainment. A map outlining a proposed Integrated Youth Support Service Framework for Sheffield is attached for reference at **Appendix D**.
- 2.7. It is proposed that through the work of the evolving Positive Activities for young people aged 8-13 work stream, that the Local Authority's Integrated Youth Support Services Framework will be extended beyond the traditional model with a 13-19 age focus, to one which will be all encompassing with a 8-19 age focus (to 25 for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities).
- 2.8. To secure the views of young people in shaping the design and specification for Integrated Youth Support Services in Sheffield, a number of young people focused consultation processes have already and will be further undertaken under the framework of activity for the IYSS communications schedule. This work stream will build on from the numerous young person consultation processes that are already in place, such as the work of the annual Every Child Matters and young persons Voices Surveys. This and other similar processes under the direction set by Sheffield's overarching Participation and Consultation Strategy, will be a fundamental priority to ensure that the participation and consultation of young people will serve as a golden thread through this phase of build up to shaping an Integrated Youth Support Service for Sheffield.
- 2.9. The outcomes specification and the proposed delivery model for Integrated Youth Support Services, in addition to being informed by the evidenced based needs of young people in the localities, will be designed around the carefully assessed needs of each locality in line with the requirements for the Community Assemblies framework.

3. Review of Youth Services

- 3.1. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the findings from a recently commissioned review of youth related policy and practice locally. A more detailed version of the main findings is available upon request. A summary of current local outcomes in response to emerging youth priority issues that contemporary youth

services are charged with impacting on, is collated in **Appendix A** for reference. **Appendix C** is a matrix and outcomes framework outlining where accountability for planning and action by local services in response to the emerging issues facing young people currently sits.

3.1.1. **Strengths**

- 3.1.2. Youth provision commissioned by Sheffield City Council in the main provides a satisfactory youth offer (13-19 age focus) with a balance of strengths and weaknesses.
- 3.1.3. In the light of the current outcomes for young people in terms of achievement, progression and the quality of provision, the fully commissioned programme of activities provides satisfactory value for money.
- 3.1.4. The commissioned providers of youth services, in the main contribute well to social inclusion as provision is effectively targeted in areas of most need.
- 3.1.5. The recently developed Youth Council is well respected and is an evolving work stream that is forecasted to achieve tangible results. The Youth Grant panel plays a significant role in Youth Opportunity Fund activity, which reached 17,000 young people last year, from a budget of approximately £500k.
- 3.1.6. Voluntary youth organisations make a significant contribution to provision (though this outcome is not recognised sufficiently through Sheffield City Council commissioning arrangements).
- 3.1.7. Partnerships between voluntary, community and faith sector providers and statutory agencies are improving, with good examples of integrated work being delivered around targeted and vulnerable young people.
- 3.1.8. There are a number of examples of very good practice with regards to integrated organisational practice and process leading to improved outcomes for local young people. School exclusions (permanent) in Sheffield are below that of statistical and national level partner authorities, with no looked after child being permanently excluded from a Sheffield school during the 2007-08 academic year.
- 3.1.9. Pupil attendance levels in schools is improving, with the local authority now in the second performing quartile nationally for school attendance.
- 3.1.10. Teenage conception rates have shown a steady reduction from its highest peak locally in 2002.
- 3.1.11. The Local Authority performance in addressing challenges for young people not in education, employment and/ or training is improving from a low base, at a greater rate of improvement than that of national neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.1.12. Commissioned services are satisfactorily funded. Commissioned provider organisational leadership and management is in most cases satisfactory.
- 3.1.13. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory as part of the wider Local Authority Safeguarding framework.
- 3.1.14. **Areas for improvement/ requiring strengthening**
- 3.1.15. Provider self- assessment and quality assurance procedures are ambiguous and unclear.
- 3.1.16. Young people are insufficiently involved in the planning and evaluation of youth work programmes at a local level.
- 3.1.17. The accommodation provided by the city council and providers for young people in the main is adequate at best.
- 3.1.18. Strategic links between the positive activities programmes for 8-13 and 13-19 require improvement.
- 3.1.19. Arrangements internally for implementation of the Sheffield City Council Participation and Consultation Strategy requires some strengthening to ensure that this thread runs

right through the Children and Young People Department and all Sheffield City Council Directorates.

- 3.1.20. The vision for the Integrated Youth Support Services has not been sufficiently well communicated and some providers have failed to fulfil key elements of contracts.
- 3.1.21. Some duties pertaining to sexual relationships education and learning disability and/ or difficulties work streams have not been discharged adequately or in some examples at all.
- 3.1.22. The Local Authority's contract monitoring framework is now becoming more rigorous, but these processes will need to apply systematically across all contract monitoring arrangements for all Integrated Youth Support Service commissioning arrangements with all commissioned providers.
- 3.1.23. Provider workforce development in the main is not adequately planned. In some cases inconsistent management information does not allow adequate evaluation of the reach, quality or cost-effectiveness of the service.
- 3.1.24. Attendance by young people to some youth provision is, in some cases low, and their achievements and outcomes are unsatisfactory in too many sessions.
- 3.1.25. Implementation of Targeted Youth Support across the Children and Young People Department and partners although progressing, requires further strengthening. Improvements will need to be made in joint planning, commissioning and funding arrangements for Targeted Youth Support locally being informed by improved deployment of common processes such as Common Assessment Framework/ Form, Safeynet and Lead Professional.
- 3.1.26. Implementation of the Council's overarching strategy for Participation and Consultation requires strengthening from a low base. Some Directorates fail to see and understand the relevance and their input into the agenda.
- 3.1.27. There has been limited progress made in response to the negative judgements reached by the 2006 Ofsted Youth Provision Inspection team, placing the Authority in a vulnerable position in the event of any inspection in the near future.

3.2. **Key factors for consideration**

- 3.2.1 Key factors for consideration are that the current arrangements for youth provision locally are at best satisfactory and adequate, fail to align with Central Government requirements for the agenda (and forthcoming local plans for Community Assemblies) and the existing product for the end user has a number of inconsistent disparities depending on locality and provider, leadership and management capability.
- 3.2.2 Current arrangements are also in a number of examples failing to deliver desired quality standards and value for money outcomes.
- 3.2.3 These key factors and the review findings have informed the recommendations outlined in section 4 of this paper.

4. **Procurement of a Single Integrated Youth Support Service**

- 4.1. There is now a requirement to procure a single lead organisation (with sub- contracting arrangement for service delivery in the localities) to discharge the Local Authorities statutory duties pertaining to Integrated Youth Support. The outcomes specification for this model will be designed to ensure alignment with the planned model of Community Assemblies, national legislative requirements for Youth Services and with an intense focus on securing value for money and improved outcomes for young people as outlined in Public Service Agreement 14 (Increase the number of children and young people on the path to success).

- 4.2. The outcomes service specification will need to be designed in a way that local successful smaller community based providers seeking to be sub- contracted to deliver youth provision, will not suffer any potential detriment as a result of the overarching single contracting approach.
- 4.3. The performance indicators underpinning this framework and the barometer for informing the LA on progress with this agenda are outlined in **Appendices A and C**. The following reasons are key drivers to support this proposed approach:
- a) Existing contractual arrangements do not meet the needs of an Integrated Youth Support Service – demonstrated in the Youth Service Review (above)
 - b) There is a need to increase local decision making within communities to a) define a specification for youth services b) ensure that future arrangements allow Community Assemblies to have the flexibility to meet change needs and priorities at a local level.
 - c) This approach for the Local Authority will allow for improved efficiency savings, rather than the current model of the Local Authority being required to operationally and strategically interface with a significant number of contract monitoring and quality assurance processes with providers.
 - d) This approach will allow for a single key performance indicator (KPI) framework being formulated and maintained with a single contracted agency/ contracted consortium, with a greater degree of rigour owing to the commissioner capacity being enhanced to challenge and support more robustly in a 'single conversation' and quality assurance interface.
 - e) The approach will be based on a model of good practice and non-discrimination in compliance with EU and UK regulations.
 - f) The model of an overarching contract with a single lead agency (or consortium under one contract) with a single key performance indicator framework will enable greater flexibility in response to locality needs through sub- contracting arrangements which will not be overly prescriptive, and will in turn allow greater flexibility, innovation and creativity in service delivery.
 - g) This approach will be underpinned by the nationally evolving practice of the commissioner deploying an outcomes based specification for the contract and that this framework will be the golden thread through all of the single contracted agency/ consortium work streams, governing all sub-contracting arrangements.
 - h) The outcomes specification will be outcomes focused and performance based, with the contract awarded on the basis of value for money and "most economically advantageous".
 - i) This approach recognises the differing needs of Sheffield's localities. By adopting a flexible approach by using an overarching core single contract with a commissioned agency/ consortium, this will allow locality/ target and

other emerging youth response specific sub- contracts to be delivered, when required by locality identified providers. This approach again will allow for a range of efficiency savings through synergies.

- j) A single contact approach will ensure explicit transparent accountability is in place for the discharging of the Local Authority's statutory duties pertaining to youth provision. Currently through the myriad of contracts that Sheffield discharges this duty, the approach allows for potential ambiguity in some circumstances over roles, responsibilities, accountability and "fuzzy boundaries" amongst contracted providers.

- 4.4. The Council has a number of options for the procurement of an Integrated Youth Support Service:
- 4.5. **Option one** - Carry out an open procurement for Integrated Youth Support Service through a single process of contracting. This single process will mean contracting a single lead organisation to deliver on the outcomes based service specification that they will be commissioned against. The commissioned organisation will be responsible for managing a range of sub arrangements with strategic and operationally fit providers, in order to ensure that the local authority discharges its statutory duties for Integrated Youth Support Services and achieves the outcomes that will be outlined in the outcomes based specification framework, whilst seeking to secure best value for money outcomes. The current position on timescales would allow for the termination of the Youth Service contract with Sheffield Futures on 31 March 2009, giving one year's notice to 31 March 2010.
- 4.6. The earliest realistic date for the start of the open procured service is 1 April 2010. **Option one** would provide for a fully integrated approach to the commissioning of the Integrated Youth Support Service with time to test out and review the outcomes of the Targeted Youth Support pilot. This option would however, leave only one year remaining of the three year Comprehensive Spending Review settlement for the first year of the open procured service. Intelligence from other Local Authorities who have already undertaken this approach anecdotally and statistically evidence improved outcomes for young people owing to the increase in locality ownership of service delivery and design in response to locality needs.
- 4.7. **Option two** - Take in house Information, Advice and Guidance elements of Targeted Youth Support, leaving the Youth Service contract with Sheffield Futures until 2017. This would not support the overall move to an overarching framework for Integrated Youth Support, though it would allow for an earlier move towards an in house delivery of Information Advice and Guidance and elements of Targeted Youth Support from 1 April 2009.
- 4.8. **Option three** - Continue with the existing model of commissioning preferred providers to deliver services set out in an Integrated Youth Support Service specification. This is unlikely to provide sufficient support to establishing a fully integrated youth support service framework, and would be counter to European Union regulations governing the commissioning of public sector contracts.
- 4.9. **Option four** - Take in house all elements of Integrated Youth Support Service core activity (Positive Activities, Information Advice and Guidance and Targeted Youth Support). This option would still not be possible until at least April 2010 because of the

timescales involved in terminating the Youth Service contract (see option one), it would be incompatible with the emerging role of the Local Authority as primarily a commissioning agency and not necessarily ensure best value.

- 4.10. From carefully evaluating these options against the changing demographic and social needs of Children and Young People in Sheffield, the preferred choice is that of **Option one**. This decision is reached in light of the increased level of flexibility that this option offers the Local Authority to be able to a) commission and monitor youth services in response to changing needs and b) to demonstrate best value. The viability of Option one will however be dependant on the outcomes of the ongoing investigation into the pensions liability matter with Sheffield Futures.
- 4.11. **Establishing an Integrated Youth Support Services Commissioning Group and supporting multi agency project risk management group**
- 4.12. The following processes are recommended and will be key to moving Youth Services in Sheffield forward in line with nationally evolving practice for Integrated Youth Support Services.
- 4.13. It is proposed that an Integrated Youth Support Service Commissioning Group is established to implement with partners and providers, explicit criteria for city- wide outcomes and priorities for the Integrated Youth Support Service agenda.
- 4.14. The Integrated Youth Support Services Commissioning Group it is recommended will be Chaired by the Lead Member for Children and Young People and will seek the views of young people through the Youth Council and other key stakeholder groups in the City e.g. Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector, Youth Offending, Police, 8-13 Positive Activities.
- 4.15. The Integrated Youth Support Service Commissioning Group will be responsible for specifying the new contract for youth provision. The views of young people will be elicited throughout the planning and procurement stages.
- 4.16. There will be a need to establish a multi agency project team with input from Legal Services, Human Resources, Finance and Corporate Contract advisory staff in addition to targeted members of the Commissioning Group. The Group will be tasked with carrying out an ongoing benefit/ risk/ cost appraisal analysis project brief as the transition to open procurement unfolds. Key risks, which will need designing out are; ongoing service delivery; business continuity and workforce morale; transfer of staff; long term financial viability and managing timescales and milestones.
- 4.17. The views of locality young people's panels and youth councils will be essential and will be given a weighting to be amalgamated with Project Board recommendations at tender evaluation stage.

5. Timetable

Activity	Milestone	Time allowed
Cabinet report recommending termination of all Youth Service contract arrangements and commencement of tender process.	September 2008	1 month
Notification provided to Sheffield Futures of the Local Authority's intent to terminate the Youth Service contract on 31.03.09 at one years notice.	September 2008	1 month
Notification to all other providers of the Local Authority's intent to procure a youth contract from 1 st April 2010.	September 2008	1 Month
Needs analysis, consultation, developing a business case and specification.	September 2008	2 to 3 months
Advertise in Official Journal of European Union to deadline for receipt of completed pre- qualifying questionnaire (European Union regulations) stipulate a minimum of 37 days to respond to an advert).	October 2008	37 days to 2 months
Shortlisting and pre- qualifying questionnaire process.	January 2009	1 to 3 months
Invitation to tender advertised/ sent to preferred providers to deadline for bids (European Union regulations stipulate a minimum of 15 days should be allowed to respond to subsequent tender).	April 2009	1 to 2 months
Receive tenders and presentations, evaluation of bids through to selection. There will be a need at this stage for a further Cabinet report to secure endorsement for the nominated preferred provider and for also requesting Cabinet agreement to commence negotiations with the nominated preferred provider.	June 2009	4 months
Contract negotiations and signing, this includes a mandatory waiting period while articles of agreement are drawn up.	October 2009	1 to 2 months
From provider selection to commencing implementation, this includes handover and transition planning.	December 2009	3 months
Contract commencement	1 April 2010	

5.1. It is recommended that the Children and Young People Directorate appoint a Commissioner for Youth Services, with a view to overseeing policy development and

implementation, quality assurance and commissioning arrangements for city- wide approaches in Integrated Youth Support Services and Strategy.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. Sheffield City Council's Children and Young People Department currently commissions a number of providers to facilitate youth provision for local children and young people. Youth provision consisting of Information, Advice and Guidance, Positive Activities and Targeted Youth Support underpins the framework for the Local authority's Integrated Youth Support Services.
- 6.2. Funding implications for the appointment of a Commissioner for Youth will be met from Local Delivery Services, with the full year costs amounting to £75K and anticipated costs for 2008-09 amounting to between 4-5/12 of the total annual costs, subject to appointment approval and timeframes.
- 6.3. Currently contract and financial arrangements with providers (2008/09) are:

IYSS Delivery Element	Grant/Funding source	Contract value	Provider
IAG and TYS	Connexions	£4,032,200	Sheffield Futures
IAG and TYS	CCIS	£57,484	Sheffield Futures
Positive Activities	Youth Service	£3,954,455	Sheffield Futures
	PAYP	£325,000	Sheffield Futures
TOTAL		£8,369,139	
TYS	Support Fund	£110,000	Black CARD
TOTAL		£110,000	
TYS	Connexions	£120,000	YASY
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	YASY
TYS	PAYP	£65,000	YASY
TOTAL		£221,000	
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	Heeley City Farm
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	KMP
TYS	Support Fund	£70,000	Rathbone
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	Roshni
TYS	Support Fund	£41,000	Signposts
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	Tinsley Youth Forum
TYS	Support Fund	£36,000	Wybourn Youth
TOTAL		255,000	
TOTAL ALL CONTRACTS		£8,955,139	

Abbreviation key:

- IYSS – Integrated Youth Support Service
- IAG – Information, Advice and Guidance
- TYS – Targeted Youth Support
- CCIS – Connexions Contract Information System
- YASY – Youth Association for South Yorkshire
- PA – Positive Activities for Young People

Connexions, Support Fund and Positive Activity (13-19 age focus) funding is allocated through the Area Based Grant. The value of any contract/s will depend on future budget decisions taken by the City Council.

- 6.4 The most recent revaluation by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority (March 2007) states that there is a shortfall of £1.3m in the pension scheme of Sheffield Futures employees. Should Sheffield Futures secure the new IYSS contract then the current arrangements with regard to this pensions deficit will continue as though no change had occurred, and the deficit will continue as the responsibility of Sheffield Futures with the City Council as guarantor. In the event that another contractor be the successful bidder then the deficit accrued will become due to be paid in full by Sheffield Futures at the end of the existing contract.
- 6.5 If Sheffield Futures were unable to pay some or this entire amount, then South Yorkshire Pensions Authority will come to the City Council for the balance under the existing guarantee agreement. There would be no obligation on any incoming contractor to pick up the pensions deficit. Should the City Council have to fund the pensions deficit, our current expectation is that we should be able to repay this under the same conditions as the City Council deficit, currently 21 years. An annual provision is to be made from within the existing resources available in the Children and Young Peoples' budget to mitigate the continuing risk of this becoming payable.
- 6.6. The published accounts of Sheffield Futures state a pensions deficit of £5.3m as at March 2008. This figure is calculated in line with national accounting standards and as such is essentially for formal reporting purposes only. Further work with South Yorkshire Pensions Authority will be undertaken to reconcile this figure to the revaluation figure of £1.3m stated above.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. Legal Implications at this stage of proceedings are that Cabinet approval is required to give notice to terminate the youth service contract with Sheffield Futures and other commissioned providers on 31 March 2009.
- 7.2. Legal advice pertaining to the level of risk associated with the pensions deficit, is that this risk is quantified and allocated to the various contracts that the Council has entered into with Sheffield Futures. An investigation into ascertaining the most appropriate strategy on how best to deal with this potential risk is currently ongoing.

8. Human Resource Implications

- 8.1. TUPE (transfer of undertakings) implications with the possibility of procuring new providers depending on the final commissioning arrangements will need to be considered as part of the overall framework of contracting.
- 8.2. Workforce development planning will need to be recognised as a critical priority for this agenda, in light of the new duties placed on professionals deployed as part of the Integrated Youth Support Services Framework. This will apply to both commissioners and providers of Integrated Youth Support Service provision.

9. Risks

Ref	Risk	Impact/ Risk
1.	As at March 2008 Sheffield Futures has incurred a pensions deficit of £1.3m. There is a continuing risk that this may become payable by the City Council under the existing guarantor arrangements.	High
2.	Capabilities of suppliers to deliver a fully Integrated Youth Support Service is limited	Low
3.	Accommodation for youth provision is poor and prevents suppliers from submitting bids. However, there will be significant investment over the next two years through grant initiatives	Low

10. Equal Opportunities

- 10.1. There is a high correlation between educational underachievement and the causes and effects of social and economic disadvantage and exclusion. Young people who leave education without qualifications and do not enter post 16 education or training when they leave school are less likely to access well paid jobs and careers
- 10.2. The Integrated Youth Support Service will be a key driver to ensuring all young people locally receive high quality support, advice and guidance to make informed choices on their options for the future. The new arrangements will need to strengthen the processes for delivering support to vulnerable groups such as Looked After Young People and Care Leavers, Disabled Young People, Young Offenders, potentially excluded Black and Minority Ethnic groups and Disabled Young People.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1. Cabinet is asked to:
- a) consider the recent review of provision for young people in the City in terms of existing contracts that deliver:
 - i) Information, Advice and Guidance;
 - ii) Targeted Youth Support;
 - iii) Positive Activities for Young People (13-19 years of age);
 - b) give authority to the Executive Director for Children and Young People to give formal notice to existing providers of youth services that the Council, through open European Union procurement, will procure new services from 1st April 2009 that have a contract start date of 1st April 2010. In addition, all services that form an Integrated Youth Support Service will be subject to open procurement;
 - c) give authority to the Executive Director for Children and Young People to establish an Integrated Youth Support Services Commissioning Group to be chaired by the Executive Member for Children and Young People from 1st September 2008, to define the specification for a new youth service that commences on 1st April 2010. That a Youth Commissioner can be appointed by the Children and Young People's Directorate to lead the Integrated Youth Support Service Framework of activity and ensure the successful procurement of a new contract for youth services;
 - d) give authority to the Executive Director for Children and Young People to establish a multi- agency project team as a sub group of the Integrated Youth Support Service Commissioning Group. This will be to carry out an ongoing benefit/ risk/ cost

appraisal, as the transition to open procurement process unfolds and that this group be lead by the proposed Youth Commissioner.