



<u>Committee and Date</u>
People Overview Committee
30 March 2022

<u>Item</u>
Public

Early Help Detached Youth Support Service update

Responsible Officer

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1. Synopsis

This report aims to provide a progress update to members of the People Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of Early Helps new detached youth support team – current detached youth work capacity and the support and services it has provided to date and service plans going forward.

2. Executive Summary

In January 2021 a new detached Youth Support Team was set up within Targeted Early Help structure. The purpose of this team was to deliver detached (street based) youth work to engage with the most-hard to reach young people who do not attend open access youth provision, often occupying out door spaces such as, street corners, bus shelters, green spaces, shopping centres and other spaces young people chose to meet. These young people are often more vulnerable to risks such as Exploitation, Substance Misuse, Mental Health Issues, Crime and anti-social behaviour and School Exclusions.

2.1. Update on recruitment

The structure consists of 1 Detached Team Manager – employed from March 2021. Three Area Youth Workers appointed in January 2021. Two grade 7 detached youth workers were recruited September 2021. Five eighteen point five hour posts where advertised in October 2021 – four of the five assistant youth support workers will start with Shropshire Council in December 2021. The final post covering the North West of the County will be advertised in the New Year 2022.

2.2 Challenges of recruiting to the detached youth support service.

Nationally, there is a shortage of Youth Workers to fill posts. We also know that local youth organisations have the same issues with recruitment. The National Youth Agency, the governing body for Youth Work has worked with National government to address these issues creating apprenticeship opportunities from level 2 to 6. We then explored using the apprenticeship levy to offer level 3 apprentice posts in Youth Work Practice wholly supporting a programme that will build capacity within the youth work sector. We have also bought other youth providers together to look at we can address this issue collectively. UCAN (nationally recognised education/training provider) will be delivering the assistant youth support worker apprenticeship programme for Shropshire Council.

(All the team at this point were recruited during a national lockdown. During this time detached youth work was given key worker status by National Government to enable continued engagement with the most vulnerable young people in society).

2.3.1 During the period of time before the full team were recruited to and during Covid national lock downs – team members time was deployed effectively:

- A. Undertaking reconnaissance work - firstly for youth workers to familiarise themselves with the area and local hot spots. To undertake observations of where young people are congregating, talk to local community members and businesses, engage with local secondary schools, pupil referral units and specialist provisions, such as Woodlands School and engage with other agencies, such as the police, education access service, other youth providers and local Parish/Councillors. School contacts are in place in all secondary schools in Shrewsbury.
- B. In the North and south of the County Youth Workers engage in contact sessions in the communities where detached youth work will take place. School Contact sessions happen in several ways, schools allowing the team to come in at lunchtime and breaktime to engage with young people. This has enabled the youth workers to introduce themselves to young people as 'safe adults' when they are approached by them out in the community. It has also enabled the team to help young people understand the role of the Youth Worker. This has been a theme that has been evident over the last 6 months. As young people have had in the past, limited access to a detached youth support work team, many young people we have engaged with over this period did not understand the role of the Youth Worker. Undertaking reconnaissance work has enabled the team to understand the needs of young people and plan their

work safely to engage with young people when fully operational.

- C. As well as detached youth work, the team have tested some group work sessions. The process of youth work is developmental and supports young people's personal, social and moral education, which helps them make better choices and be an integral part of their communities. With the information the team have gathered we have looked at how we can address some of the issues that young people face. We know that young woman with mental concerns are more likely to be exploited. To address this, we have been successful with some funding to roll out the EmpowerHER programme. A legacy programme developed by UK Youth targeting emotional health through Social Action.
- D. The team also piloted an outreach project over the summer a local park 'The Quarry'. This was to support young people with their behaviour whilst using the park and offering a 'safe adult' available if needed. We hope to develop this work next year across the County utilising the Holiday Activity Fund
- E. During the year, the team have established good working relationships with both our infrastructure support providers/Youth Work delivery partners alongside other youth organisations. Opportunities to collaborate and work together will keep young people safe in their communities whilst supporting their personal and social development and giving them a voice in their local communities and the wider society.
- F. Plans have been developed to create the detached youth work team's performance framework – to capture impact of work undertaken with young people. This model will be tested in January 2022 when the team become fully operational.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Note the contents of this report.

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Impact on Children and Vulnerable Adults, Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community and other Consultation)

- 4.1. It is important that vulnerable young people have access to good quality youth support provision – which includes both open access youth clubs and a more targeted detached youth support service. Overall, this has been achieved in Shropshire. Improving and supporting young people’s social and emotional development and transition into adulthood, and with the opportunity of reaching a greater number of young people both universally and with targeted support. With the exception of events beyond the control of Shropshire Council ie those times of national lockdown and other events/policies related to the Covid pandemic, which are self-explanatory.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. None

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The detached team are based in family hubs close to the area of work – hence decreasing the need for travel by car, less fumes, less mileage.
- 6.2 The team commits to having conversations with young people about climate change and utilising resources available to aid young people to make changes themselves that helps to mitigate change to the climate.

Background

- 6.2. In January 2020 Cabinet approved the new Youth Support Team model (report attached at appendix A). In section 5.51 of that report, Shropshire’s Model for Youth Provision highlights the following aims:
- work with partners, including town and parish councils, to design and deliver a localised model of youth provision
 - Work with local providers/partners and voluntary sector to support the delivery of open access youth clubs.
 - Target services towards those young people in most need of support including those who are vulnerable or most at risk.
 - Ensure qualified youth workers are in place across Shropshire, providing the skills and experience needed to make most difference.
 - Work to address emerging social issues and concerns such as youth violence and knife crime, county lines etc.
 - Provide a localised youth offer – ensuring there are workers on the ground able to reach young people within the community e.g.schools/colleges, on the streets.

- Build and strengthen the system of support available to meet the needs of young people by linking qualified youth workers to other services and specialist workers.
 - Improve the use of information to understand impact and enable investment to build on success.
- 6.3. The new Youth Support Team have engaged and met with all Town and Parish Councils that were delivering Youth Clubs on behalf of Shropshire Council. These were all very positive meetings with many Town and Councils committing additional funds to Youth Activity and Youth Work in their communities. Update on Current situation with Town and Parish Councils can be found at appendix B
- 6.4. The Youth Support Team have identified the areas they will work in. This has been determined by regular information and intelligence from the Safeguarding Child Exploitation Team. The team have a good knowledge of hot spots and have been building relationships with young people from these communities within school settings.
- 6.5. The team are currently testing personal and social education programmes which can support young people's personal and social development. These programmes will explore, and challenge young people's attitudes to emerging social issues giving them a safe space for discussions and learning.
- 6.6. The National Youth Agency has recently undertaken a Census of Youth Activity and Youth Work across the statutory, voluntary and community sector. The Youth Support Team encouraged these organisations to submit their information to the NYA. As long as youth organisations have submitted their information, we will have a good understanding of what Shropshire's Youth Offer looks like. We are still waiting for the full results of the census.
- 6.7. The detached youth support team are currently working with Shropshire Council's IT Team to develop an App or form to collect data, measure impact and interpret insights for future development of work.

7. Additional Information

- 7.1. Youth Support Cabinet report attached – January 2020 appendix A
- 7.2. Town and Parish Council open access youth clubs update appendix B

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. Covid did impact on the ability to recruit to the original detached youth support team structure. However – given these constraints the detached youth support team is now 98% in place. With plans to recruit to the final apprenticeship post in January 2022.
- 8.2. A large majority of the Town and Parish councils who historically received LJC funding, have continued to commission open access

youth provision, whilst others are developing their offer particularly taking into consideration of how Covid has affected and impacted on Youth People's lives. The additional youth work that the Youth Support Team will undertake in communities and schools will strengthen the Youth Work offer around the county giving more young people access to a qualified Youth Worker.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Non

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Kirstie Hurst Knight

Local Member: All members

Appendices

Appendix A Cabinet Report 20 January 2020 – Youth Support

Appendix B Town and Parish Council Open Access Youth Clubs Update