

Children, Education and Skills

Youth Provision

Feedback from Engagement Events

May 2021



- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Stakeholder Engagement Activities**
 - 2.1. Pre-Engagement Event
 - 2.2. Stakeholder Engagement Events/Stakeholder Survey
- 3. Needs of Young People**
- 4. Activities and Interventions**
 - 4.1. What should there be more of?
 - 4.2. Potential Future Models of Delivery
 - 4.2.1. Detached Youth Provision
 - 4.2.2. Youth Fund
 - 4.3. Other Types of Delivery
 - 4.4. Commissioning for Future Delivery
 - 4.5. Targeting of Resources
- 5. Voice of Young People**
- 6. Collaborative Working**
- 7. Outcome and Performance Measures**
- 8. Youth Sector Training Needs**
- 9. Social Value**
 - 9.1. Green and Sustainable
 - 9.2. Think, Buy, Support Newcastle
 - 9.3. Community Focussed
 - 9.4. Ethical Leadership
- 10. Young People's Engagement**
- 11. Summary**

1. Introduction

This document provides a summary of the feedback received in seeking a new delivery model for Newcastle City Council's Youth Provision.

The current model is a consortium led by Barnardo's that comprises the following:

- Detached provision
- Centre based activities (although this provision has had to adapt in line with government and NYA guidance)
- 1:1 provision
- Digital offer in response to COVID-19.

It is delivered in 3 geographical areas: East, West and Central.

We are reviewing these arrangements, in light of:

- Move to locality-based arrangements as part of the Children and Families Newcastle (C&FN) model
- Changes to the sector and the effects of COVID-19
- The opportunity to build relationships, including with grassroots organisations and delivery
- Impact of COVID-19 – exacerbated vulnerabilities of young people, for example, mental health, training and employment and health and wellbeing
- Local and national research on youth services
- Changes to funding regimes/funding risks to smaller organisations.

The purpose was to engage stakeholders in the design of the council's investment in youth services and will inform the new model which will be detailed in the consultation phase.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Engagement activities were undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021

and in total we engaged with 46 youth organisations and 35 young people.

The activities comprised of the following:

- Pre-Engagement Event
- Stakeholder Engagement Events
- Stakeholder Survey
- Young People's Survey (Section 10).

2.1 Pre-Engagement Event – 5 November 2020

This event was attended by 27 people from CVS youth organisations, with the Youth Engagement Group. The aim of the session was to inform the sector about the work of C&FN and to discuss its alignment to the future delivery of Youth Provision. We also wanted to inform the youth sector that the Council was rethinking its model of delivery of Youth Provision and that a series of engagement events would be taking place. We wanted the sector to be aware of the timescales for the activities planned and to participate fully in the engagement.

The rethinking of Youth Provision was welcomed. Providers were keen to be involved in the engagement and consultation for a new model and also wanted the voice of young people to be heard.

2.2 Stakeholder Engagement Events – 23/24 November 2020 and Stakeholder Survey – 25 November – 8 December 2020

These online events were attended by 40 people (including CVS youth organisations, community organisations, local funders) over the two days.

The aim of the session was to:

- Highlight that Youth Provision is an important part of C&FN
- Share current thinking on the future of Council's Youth Provision

- Get provider thoughts on the ideas we have for a future delivery model (a directly commissioned detached youth provision and a young people led grants fund)
- Get provider thoughts on other delivery models
- Consider Social Value opportunities
- Describe planned engagement and to set out next steps
- Seek support of providers to encourage young people's participation in engagement.

The events were followed by a stakeholder survey which allowed for more detailed responses to the proposals. There were 25 responses to the online survey.

The events and the survey highlighted strong support for **a young people led grant fund** in favour of a direct commissioned model of delivery. The sector felt very strongly that a directly commissioned model of delivery was prohibitive to smaller grassroots organisations and may not allow for innovation and flexibility in a changing environment. They also agreed with the **need for detached youth provision** particularly in relation to it being a COVID resilient intervention. There was also a recognition that there needed to be **an increase of collaborative working** as evidenced in response to the pandemic.

The key themes identified from both the engagement events and the survey have been summarised in **sections 3-9 below**.

3. Needs of Young People

The needs of young people that a youth offer should respond to were highlighted as follows:

- Mental health
- Anti-social behaviour

- Family and relationships including domestic violence, social isolation, stability
- Ownership and engagement of young people to make positive decisions
- Raising aspiration for young people and alleviating concerns for the future
- Education, training and employment, and accreditation including informal educational opportunities and support for NEET young people
- Positive relationships with peers/role models and trusted relationships with workers
- Risk taking behaviours e.g. county lines, gang associated behaviour, sexual exploitation
- Positive activities – quality social time outside of school which is free, accessible and isn't all on line
- Types of activities/interventions; detached youth work, outdoor activities and trips, face-to-face social interaction and group support
- A digital offer and the promotion of online safety
- Health – substance misuse, unhealthy lifestyles and impact of deprivation, sexual health etc.

The top issues highlighted were mental health, followed by positive relationships (peers, family and sexual relationships) and the types of activities and interventions to address the needs of young people.

4. Activities and Interventions

4.1 What should there be more of?

Participants highlighted the following:

- Meaningful digital/online engagement with young people, using media that young people relate to e.g. TikTok, Xbox Live and Playstation Live

- Trusted youth workers who can listen, engage and provide services that are responsive, creative and measurable and which are delivered from a place of safety and promote ownership
- Detached youth work that meets the needs of young people
- Collaborative and community partnerships which increase the capacity of the local organisations and develop new initiatives
- Have young people at the heart of service design, development and delivery
- Listening to and empowering young people
- Support for grassroots organisations delivering localised provision
- The ability to identify and respond to gaps in provision
- Understanding the challenges in different areas and communities
- The need to provide more provision in safe and controlled spaces
- Need to encourage more young volunteers and young leaders, and promote ownership and opportunities for social action
- Additional capacity and resources to be able to respond effectively to emerging hotspots without it taking away resources needed in other areas.

The top issues highlighted were the need for diverse localised provision, young people's involvement and youth voice activity, more services that can respond quickly to areas of emerging need, and the importance of relationships and trust, and the need for collaborative and community partnerships.

4.2 Potential Future Models of Delivery

Two potential models of delivery; a commissioned detached youth provision and

a youth fund, were shared with the participants and their feedback is captured below.

4.2.1 Detached Youth Provision

The advantages and disadvantages of detached youth provision identified by the participants are as follows:

Advantages

- Detached provision is a COVID resilient model and can deliver services to young people in the tightest of restrictions
- Delivery in the heart of communities, in safe places and flexible to the changing needs of young people
- Building strong relations on their own terms on their own territory
- Detached is a good first intervention but needs to link to other youth interventions
- Detached allows the opportunity of targeting young people who are not necessarily engaging in services
- This model is cost effective and doesn't depend on access to buildings and related costs.
- Builds community cohesion and reduced ASB.

Disadvantages

- Lack of safe space
- Less opportunity to support young people in a more consistent way within a safe space
- Due to the pandemic more workers are delivering outreach and detached provision, however detached youth work warrants specific detached youth work training
- It is always difficult to assess and manage the risks for staff, and there needs to be dynamic risk assessment
- Limitations due to weather/darker nights
- Due to limited capacity/funding, youth workers cannot always be responsive to

requests for their services in areas where there is escalating ASB issues

- Difficult to evidence outcomes.

Other comments

- Detached provision needs to be part of a wider delivery model
- Detached work should not be a short-term intervention
- Detached provision was recognised as an essential part of a new model, however respondents felt it shouldn't be a single model of delivery
- Detached youth work needs to complement and connect with other youth interventions increasing the opportunities for young people to be signposted to.

4.2.2 Youth Fund

The advantages and disadvantages of a youth fund identified by the participants are as follows:

Advantages

- Local knowledge and understanding of need
- The organisations offering grants know the areas and the problems to overcome
- An opportunity to increase partnership and collaborative models that are mutually effective for all parties
- Grant awarding can help neighbourhood youth projects to build and develop great projects with young people
- Having young people at the heart of services helps ensure that what is being delivered is meeting the needs and interests of young people
- It is good to get young people involved in the decision making and planning of projects to build their skills
- Local money being made available to support local organisations
- You will get some real on the ground, experienced organisation working

directly with the young people they already have relationships with

- Each local area has a different demographic and 'personality', bespoke offers have the real opportunity to create flexibility
- Flexibility to design a person-centred intervention.

Disadvantages

- Money is limited
- Competition between local organisations
- We need to avoid onerous monitoring
- Small grants need to be constantly applied for whereas a larger grants could ensure sustainability and good planning with security of funding.

Potential usage of a youth fund

- More than two thirds of respondents said that they would use a grant fund
- More than half of respondents agreed that grants should be between £10,000 - £25,000.

4.3 Other Types of Delivery

Participants were also asked for examples of other types of delivery that could be considered to deliver a youth provision, and the suggestions included:

- Building based provision
- Digital/other media
- One-to-one
- Volunteering/accreditation
- Outdoors
- School based
- Outreach
- Community based intervention
- Collaborative work
- Activities/events/trips.

4.4 Commissioning for Future Delivery

Participants were asked about their thoughts on the different ways that services could be commissioned, particularly their thoughts on

a direct commissioning model. Their responses were as follow:

Advantages of a direct commissioning model

- Clarity of purpose and capacity
- Contractual obligations
- Quality assurance
- The Commissioners can work with one or two competent organisations, who can be trusted to reach out and work with young people in a safe and planned way
- Organisations that are trusted and known in the areas to complete the work needed can be funded through the direct commissioning model
- It will enable the smaller organisations to obtain security to deliver the work that is required and not have to constantly source smaller pots of funding.

Limitations of a direct commissioning model

- The funding is not accessible for smaller organisations
- May not allow for innovation and flexibility to a changing environment
- Other (newer/better) ways of responding may occur/develop which were not included in the commission model.

A grants model was seen as far more advantageous to smaller grassroots organisations over a direct commissioning model. The opportunity that a grant fund may lend itself to a more collaborative approach to delivery was also highlighted.

4.5 Targeting of Resources

Participants suggested that resources should be targeted by:

- Communities of interest/identity
- Communities of geography
- Citywide offer
- Areas of highest need
- Avoiding duplication
- Person centred activities

- NEET.

Participants strongly supported that communities of interest or identity should be of highest priority in this model. Support for young people not in Education, Training or Employment was also highlighted as a group needing additional support.

5. Voice of young people

Participants were asked about the importance of the voice of young people, responses included:

- Provides a sense of ownership
- Enables young people to feel valued and respected
- Personal, social and educational development for young people
- Opportunities for co-production (with ongoing involvement from young people)
- Young people feel heard and have influence
- Important to get a diverse range of voices including but not limited to young people in receipt of services.

6. Collaborative Working

The participants highlighted how collaborative working could be strengthened with statutory and non-statutory partners:

- Local community partnerships building upon good practice in the city
- Sharing resources e.g. buildings,
- Sharing of skills and good practice
- Collaboration not competition
- Avoiding duplication and working in collaboration to attract funding to support joint delivery
- Improved communication networks
- Better linkages with statutory provision.

7. Outcomes and Performance Measures

What outcomes should we aim to achieve and how should we measure success?

The participants raised the following issues with regard to outcomes and performance measures:

- Establishment of local youth networks in a geographical area to support collaboration
- A clear patchwork of services across the city working with understanding of needs and other partner organisations
- A provision in this manner should be measured on every individual positive outcome, whether it is slight or great
- Success measures need to be realistic, clear and tangible
- Being a free service, easily accessible in local areas and operating to equality and diversity making it inclusive to every young person
- Soft outcomes are important, confidence, self-esteem, aspirations for the future, behaviours, attitudes. All contribute to overall positive development of young people
- Evaluation using case studies.

8. Youth Sector Training Needs

The following gaps in training in the youth sector were identified:

- How to engage older people age
- Mental health support
- Training for working with young people who are harder to engage
- Level 3 youth work qualifications
- More qualified youth workers
- Train the trainer standard for youth delivery
- Need for staff to be JNC qualified, regular affordable youth work qualifications and refreshers.

9. Social value - Green and Sustainable Think, Buy, Support

Newcastle; Community Focused; Ethical Leadership.

The Stakeholder engagement events and the survey highlighted a range of complementary social value measures that could be achieved through the delivery of the model.

9.1 Green and Sustainable

Participants highlighted the following:

- Organisations should be able to demonstrate green/sustainable policy
- Use of local suppliers
- Use of recyclable materials if being used
- Green credentials are important but can be costly to achieve for small organisations.

9.2 Think, Buy, Support Newcastle

Participants highlighted the following:

- Targeting the Fund to smaller grassroots organisations retains funding within the city
- Opportunity to maximise local knowledge and trust of communities
- Young people receiving education, training employment and volunteering opportunities locally will increase their stake in their communities
- Living wage, flexible working, locally based solutions with local organisations
- Using local companies, employing local staff
- More opportunities for young people to get involved as volunteers in the youth sector and ultimately to gain training, qualifications and apprenticeships /employment within the sector
- Better use of local knowledge
- Benefits to the local economy.

9.3 Community Focused

Participants highlighted the following:

- Provision that supports the positive growth and development of young people
- Delivery that prioritises inclusion through its methods and venues
- Increasing community spirit and creating pride in communities
- Having/creating positive role models and positive relationships in communities
- Investment in services with proven track records of supporting young people, putting young people at the heart of what they do
- Increasing the number of opportunities for progression for young people
- Safer/healthier communities
- To improve the lives of our young people, give them a voice to be heard
- Through working with the young people and supporting their families, it will reduce crime, improve wellbeing, give an understanding of accessible services and build communities
- The collaboration of services will ensure the community has access to opportunities to meet their needs within their areas
- Creating access to local spaces with a wide range of activities and support.

9.4 Ethical Leadership

Participants highlighted the following:

- The sector could lead the way in supporting young people through volunteering opportunities
- Supporting and investing in our young people from an early age to become youth workers of the future
- Young people representation on Boards.

These considerations will be embedded in the new model, particularly the voice of young people, co-production with young people and supporting young people's pathways into new opportunities.

10. Young People's Engagement – Survey – January 2021

This online survey was undertaken independently by Investing in Children and there were 35 responses. One of our priorities was to understand the impact of COVID-19 on young people and the kind of services they would like to see in Newcastle. Of the young taking part, currently 47% used a youth work service (including sports activities, youth clubs/projects and counselling services), 28% did not and 25% were not using a service at the time of the survey.

A number of young people said that they would like to be involved in future decision making about funding for youth work and will be contacted for further engagement.

The findings were as follows:

What they like about the youth services they use

- Supports mental health
- Motivation and keeps them out of trouble
- Feeling a part of a team and family
- Training
- Feeling listened to
- Service is accessible
- Helps with problem solving
- Provides a different view
- Nice cosy comfortable social
- It's like a family
- Trips and activities
- Getting to learn from each other
- The staff.

What has changed since COVID?

- Services have closed
- Negative impact on mental health
- No access to gyms
- Nothing – been replaced by digital offer
- Smaller groups
- Lots of plans have been cancelled.

What they liked when they were attending the youth services

- Chilling with friends
- Improved confidence
- Meet new people/being part of a group
- Health and support
- Fun activities
- Nice youth workers.

What kind of services they would like to see for young people in Newcastle?

- Group physical exercise settings to be open (gym, fitness club etc.)
- Youth centres/youth groups/youth clubs
- Mental health counselling
- More sporting activities
- More activities and trips
- Places for kids to enjoy themselves
- Supported trusting relationships.

Where do they go for support when they need it?

- Family (47%)
- Friends (27%)
- Youth worker (16%)
- Coach (6%)
- Teacher (4%)

Where should youth work services take place?

- Outside (23%)
- Schools (19%)
- Parks (19%)
- Online (17%)
- Community centres (14%).

In summary, young people felt the greatest impact on them at this time was the effect on their mental health, and one of the key reasons for this was because services were not accessible during the pandemic and this meant that they could not access their support networks as easily/at all. The youth services they attended had a really positive impact on their lives and supported their mental health, they felt like a part of a

group/team/family, and it gave them a place to be heard.

They also want to be able to use safe spaces, and to have provision taking place outdoors and in parks.

11. Summary

Overall engagement has highlighted the following factors which will be used to design the new model:

- Detached youth work must be an essential component of the final delivery model
- The model needs to be flexible and responsive
- One type of provision will not meet the needs of young people, there needs to be a range of interventions
- A flexible grant fund model received significantly more support than a direct commissioning model
- The voice of young people was highlighted as a fundamental feature of the new model. This will create a feeling of young people being valued and respected
- Feedback and contribution needs to be from all young people including those in receipt of the services and young people not known to services
- Support for organisations to enable them to respond more rapidly to emerging need, e.g. hotspots.