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Preface

By Cllr Karen Hamilton

Chair Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee



It has been interesting and rewarding to be part of this Youth Services scrutiny review. The review was undertaken after a petition was presented to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee in March 2011, when young people raised their concerns about the effects of future changes to youth services, which have been greatly transformed over the last few years.

During the review, 13 youth facilities were visited across the city and different types of services were examined, including youth work at council and non council facilities of various sizes, detached youth work, and the of hub and spoke model which is being introduced.

We found many of the clubs were undertaking work to create or further develop community cohesion and, as a result, young people reported it had given them the opportunity to make friends with people they would otherwise not have interacted with. Young and older people were seen working together sharing their knowledge and skills. One example was given of disabled and able bodied young people working in partnership using a system referred to as "buddying up".

We also saw examples of good practice around youth unemployment, educational attainment, sexuality, addictions, bullying, fitness, body image, special education needs and young carers, in addition to supporting foster carers and teachers.

Despite the fact that many of the facilities were found to have limited resources, it was impressive to see what had been achieved due to the creativity of the young people and the youth workers. The youngsters viewed the youth service as an invaluable resource and much emphasis was placed on the relationships they had developed with their youth workers. In addition, the ease of access to youth clubs was also important as young people regardless of socio- economic group, ethnicity, gender or disability benefited from accessing the service.

An example was given of a young person with autism who didn't communicate outside of his family but after attending youth club went on to win a "Brummie of the Year "award. One young person took the stance they were "Reppin' Birmingham". She felt they had a part to play in representing Birmingham and creating a good impression of the city and of young people as a whole. There were many more examples of the positive effects of youth work.

I believe we only skimmed the surface of the youth work being carried out in the city. Numerous organisations such as churches, scouts, guides, cadets and schools continue to provide youth services and it is important that the council understands and appreciates the intricacies of youth service provision.



Summary

At a time of unprecedented financial pressures on local authority spending on services the Children and Education O&S Committee received a petition signed by over 10,000 young people from across the city, expressing concern about the future of the Council's Youth Service. In response, we decided to undertake a piece of work looking in detail at the remodelling of the service with a particular emphasis on exploring the quality of the consultation with young people going forward.

We received written and verbal evidence from the Youth Service and other youth related services (including senior officers, youth workers, Youth Offending Service and Integrated Family Support Team - IFST), voluntary sector groups (including the Girl Guides and Scouts, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, YMCA, The Pump, Young Disciples, Fairbridge Princes Trust and Birmingham Association of Youth Clubs) and statutory organisations (such as the Police, Schools and Health). To explore a wider national perspective, we also spoke to an HMI Inspector for OFSTED and a representative of the Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services.

We felt it was essential that we heard from young people, so a series of focus groups were held with 132 young people in 9 different youth projects across the city. This culminated in a joint session with Members so that young people could feed back the results of the exercise directly. In addition a survey was undertaken by our Voice is Power (VIP) representatives to seek the views of young people who do not currently use Council youth service provision.

Finally, we undertook a series of visits to 13 different youth projects across the city to witness first hand the full range and variety of youth projects currently being run by the service and to meet their users and staff in a more informal setting.

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?

Youth work is an educative process, offering young people a broad range of activities, experiences and support, aimed at stimulating their interests and abilities and being responsive of their needs. It is essentially a voluntary activity (young people can choose to engage with it unlike school) requiring skilled adults to facilitate. It makes extensive use of learning by experience and small groups, in settings that vary from youth clubs to mentoring, from sailing to reading. It aims to be accessible to all and reflective of wide cultural and social diversity of the community.

Youth workers can make a crucial difference to young people's lives, particularly those who are most disadvantaged. They can offer young people high quality opportunities for informal learning and personal and social development and help young people develop the strong aspirations they need to realise their potential. They can identify early, any specific and complex problems for which young people need more specialised help. They can listen to young people and build their confidence and skills to make their voice heard in decisions. They can relate to young people with respect, while challenging them to take responsibility.



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THE YOUTH SERVICE IN BIRMINGHAM

The aim of the City Council's Youth Service is to provide young people with enjoyable opportunities and challenging experiences together with information, support and guidance in order to enable them to achieve and develop their skills, abilities, self-esteem, values and identity in their transition to adult life.

The service impacts on the youth population, defined as 11-25, but with a specific focus on 13-19 year olds. It operates on an open access basis and is available to any young person who chooses to use it. It seeks to provide a geographical spread of centres and projects across the city. However there are currently gaps in coverage in certain parts of the city.

In 2010 /2011 total attendances at centres and projects for 11-25 year olds were 225,642. For 13-19 year olds this was 185,656 and the services contacted 18,115 individuals.

REMODELLING OF THE SERVICE

Going forward, in view of both recent budget reductions and to take account of the need to work more closely with the Integrated Family Support Teams (IFSTs) the service is currently being remodelled to provide a network of provision.

This will be made up of **Service Hubs** which will be major centres of youth work activity, providing services seven days a week for young people and **Satellite Clubs and Projects** which will be managed from the Hubs, and will enable staff teams to reach out into surrounding areas to provide youth work. In addition there will be a number of **Local Youth Centres** which will be free standing centres for youth work, which would not be part of the Hub network due to their location and their proximity to satellite provision.

FINDINGS

Through our evidence taking sessions, consultation and visits we identified the following strengths and weaknesses of the service.

Identified Strengths of the Youth Service in Birmingham

The Youth Service is staffed by a well qualified, committed and passionate workforce, operating from premises of an extremely variable quality. The young people using the service are bright and hugely enthusiastic about it. It provides young people with a network of safe places to go across the city and because it is open access and predicated upon the voluntary engagement of young people, the service is able to build the type of special relationships that are necessary to work most effectively with young people. It offers real opportunities for the active participation of young people and it benefits from a high level of volunteering

The service is well respected locally by a number of other statutory agencies, including schools. There are some pockets of innovation and creative partnership working, such as those established at the Pump and planned for the two Myplace projects.



The new hub and spoke model offers a real opportunity to build closer working links in each area of the city between youth workers and the network of centres. This should mean that there is greater flexibility, more support, better communication and a wider sharing of best practice between youth workers, although it will lead to a reduction of provision in some places.

The links with the Integrated Family Support Team will ensure that youth work has a proper place at the table with other targeted family services provided on an area basis.

We believe that under the new model the role of the Area Youth Officers and the Senior Hub Workers (in their neighbourhood role) will be essential to securing the effectiveness of the links between the Youth Service and all other City Council services, voluntary and community sector organisations and statutory agencies in the area.

Identified Areas of Weaknesses / Limitations

There is currently a lack of strategic overview of all of the services (both statutory and voluntary run and led), activities and resources available to young people across the city. At this time of increasing pressure on budgets and spending across all sectors, there is an urgent need for the City Council to facilitate a better linking up of all young people's services in the city, in partnership with all other stakeholders and young people, to maximise all the available resources and opportunities in each local area/ constituency/ IFST area.

There is little clarity and no mapping of all of the services for young people that are available and even for our own Youth Service, there is insufficiently detailed knowledge of users/ non users and a real need to explore what more can be done to increase the balance of usage by girls. In addition to date, there have been significant gaps in the City Council Youth Service provision in some parts of the city.

It is unclear what rationale is currently used to set the balance of the Council's Youth Service between centre based, outreach and detached youth work in the city. Going forward the new model of provision will require youth workers to take on responsibility for a case load of referrals from the IFST teams and it is not clear how this work load will impact in practice on the overall balance of the service between open access and targeted work.

Working relationships between the Youth Service and parts of the voluntary and community sector, other statutory services and constituencies and localities are patchy and need to be strengthened. There is also a need to ensure that both the best practice and innovations in joint working established in some areas of the city is shared more widely.

In general, the Council's Youth Service is not well promoted/ or widely recognised and the variety of activities available, the achievements of young people and the scale of volunteering and fundraising are undersold. There is a need for the service to communicate its unique selling point better, as to some non users currently it is seen as not "cool". Young people suggested one way they could help to promote the services was for them to develop their own website.



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There is a need to be more creative in terms of fund raising. Opportunities need to be explored to take full advantage of all funding currently available as well as to actively seek additional monies both from the private sector and emerging national government pots, for example, those aimed at troubled families.

We were concerned to hear that some young people have an inflexible attitude to moving across the city. However, we also heard from other young people that they would like to have the opportunity to take part in activities that would enable them to mix more with other young people from centres elsewhere in the city. This is an idea that is worth exploring, as it could have a beneficial impact on breaking down barriers and building social cohesion. We recognise that it may prove challenging in some areas. There is clearly a lack of integration across the city and thought needs to be given to what can be done to facilitate more movement across the city to actively promote cohesion.

Some concerns were expressed about the Myplace projects including the fear that they would receive a disproportionate share of the resources available to the service to the detriment of the other smaller centres. It was also felt that many young people would not attend because of where they were located (reasons here ranged from them being too far away or the location raising safety concerns. Finally, there were concerns that they would not be able to generate sufficient income to be sustainable in the long term.

The service urgently needs to engage in debate about how to measure, calculate, demonstrate and communicate the contribution of youth work to recognised positive outcomes for young people that goes beyond simple measures of output.

Many of the young people we met on our visits felt that they would like to see more contact with local elected members and their youth projects. One way of doing this might be to establish councillor champions for young people in each constituency.

Going forward it is unclear to us how the new Hub and Spoke model for the Youth Service and enhanced links with the IFSTs, which are based around 16 areas, will link up coherently with locality working around Wards and Constituencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations focus on three broad areas:

- Strengthening the strategic leadership of youth services in the city and ensuring that there is involvement of all stakeholders including members and young people;
- Maintaining a balance between targeted and open access youth provision across the city; and
- Continuing to innovate, explore new ways of working, build new delivery partnerships, share best practice, market and promote the service, and improve working links between the Youth Service, other statutory and voluntary organisations involved in youth provision and localities.



Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families works with all partners and young people to establish strategic leadership of all youth activities and services in the city. This should develop a vision based upon an understanding of needs, current provision and gaps in provision across the city. It will also need to establish a framework for setting minimum standards for services as well as monitoring arrangements that may then be used to commission services against.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	June 2013
R2	That the Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families widens the invitation to the twice yearly Standing Conference of Youth organisations to ensure all groups that have an interest in youth work in the city, young people and Council Members are able to participate. The Cabinet Member should also report back to the Children and Education O&S Committee on the outcomes from these events.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	November 2012
R3	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores opportunities for increasing the involvement of young people in the commissioning and monitoring of youth services to promote access and ensure that their needs are met.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	February 2013
R4	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families confirms a commitment to maintaining a mixed provision of both targeted and open access youth services in the city.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R5	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families ensures that the Area Youth Officers maximise opportunities within the constituencies to build partnerships and enhance locality working by linking up with the Directorate Locality Champions and Ward Champions.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	August 2012
R6	To respond to concerns raised by young people during consultation, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families asks	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	September 2012



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	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
	Constituency Chairmen to identify elected member youth champions at a constituency level.		
R7	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families reviews the provision of youth services under the new Hub and Spoke model after twelve months of implementation and also produces a report to the Children and Education O&S Committee highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions taken to ensure the sustainability of the MYplace centres; • The actions taken across the service to build and increase community cohesion; and • The impact and effectiveness of the model in the city. 	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	April 2013
R8	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families develops local measures and adopts the frameworks for measuring outcomes from youth work being developed by government.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	June 2013
R9	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families documents and reports back on how the links between the City Councils Youth Service and the Integrated Family Support Teams are operating on the ground.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R10	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families seeks to build upon and share the good practice found in parts of the city to strengthen working links between the Council's Youth Service and other statutory and voluntary and community sector services.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R11	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores new models of youth service delivery and mixed funding streams (such as those utilised by Broadway School and the Pump) and adopts these where possible on a greater scale across the city.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	February 2013
R12	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores opportunities to raise the profile and promote more actively the activities of the City Council's Youth Service. (and if possible the signposting of other youth projects in the city) This could be done -via a	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012



	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
	dedicated website or other forms of social media run by young people themselves in order to attract more young people to use the service.		
R13	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Children and Education O&S Committee in October 2012. The Committee will schedule subsequent progress reports thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012



1 Introduction

1.1 Reason for this Inquiry

1.1.1 In March 2011 the Children and Education O&S Committee received a petition expressing concerns about the future provision of Youth Services in the city. This had been signed by over 10,000 young people in the city. Following discussion, it was resolved that the Committee would undertake a focussed piece of work aimed at exploring the remodelling of the service with a particular emphasis on considering the quality of the consultation with young people going forward.

1.1.2 The key questions explored were:

- What is the role and purpose of the City Council's Youth Service in Birmingham and how will it be delivered in future, given the reduction in resources available?
- How does the service link up with and complement the youth activities provided by other organisations? and
- How will young people be engaged and involved in the development and evolution of the service going forward?

Membership of the Inquiry Group

1.1.3 The investigation was undertaken by the Children and Education O&S Committee with some evidence sessions held in full committee and a programme of visits and informal investigation meetings led by a cross party group of Councillors including Cllrs Karen Hamilton, Lyn Collin, James Bird and Martin Straker Welds, as well as Ben Cochrane (union observer for Unite).

Key Questions

1.1.4 We started off with a series of questions which formed the basis of the exercise:

- What is the role and purpose of the City Council Youth Service – what is the Council strategy re youth provision?
- How is the effectiveness of the service measured – what are the outcomes?
- What is the current budget now and in the future for the Youth Service and what can reasonably be delivered within the resources available?
- What type of provision is the City Council actually putting in place on the ground, how is it resourced, where is it and specifically who is it for? (How is it distinctive from the provision of other activities for young people?)
- What are the gaps?



- How will this model of service join up with other services for young people delivered by other providers in the city e.g. the voluntary sector?
- How will it link up and support the work of schools and other services (both universal and targeted) within the Children Young People and Families Directorate?
- How sustainable is this model given further anticipated reductions in the budget in the future? and
- How can young people become more engaged in service as decision makers and shapers of what is provided?

1.2 Methodology

- 1.2.1 Following a period of background research, we received written and verbal evidence from the Youth Service and other youth related services (including senior officers, youth workers, Youth Offending Service and Integrated Family Support Team - IFST), voluntary sector groups (including the Girl Guides and Scouts, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, YMCA, The Pump, Young Disciples, Fairbridge Princes Trust and Birmingham Association of Youth Clubs) and statutory organisations (such as the Police, Schools and local health projects).
- 1.2.2 To explore a wider national perspective we also spoke to an HMI Inspector for OFSTED and a representative of the Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services.
- 1.2.3 We felt it was essential that we heard from young people so a series of focus groups were held with 132 young people in 9 different youth projects across the city. This culminated in a joint session with Members so that young people could feed back the results of the exercise directly. In addition a survey was undertaken by Voice is Power (VIP) representatives to explore the views of young people who do not currently use youth service provision.
- 1.2.4 Finally, we undertook a series of visits to 13 different youth projects across the city to witness first hand, the full range and variety of youth projects currently being run by the service and to meet their users and staff in a more informal setting. A list of the witnesses and the centres we visited can be found in **Appendix 1**.

1.3 Young People Today

- 1.3.1 Birmingham is a growing city with a population of just over one million people - making it the largest UK city outside of the capital. Birmingham has both a young and diverse population, with a greater number of under-15s than any other major city in Europe, Birmingham's population is projected to grow from 1.02 million in 2008 to 1.1 million by 2018 and 1.17 million by 2028.
- 1.3.2 According to the projections, between 2008 and 2028, the number of children in Birmingham (ie 0-15 yr olds) in 2028 will grow by 47,500 to 270,500 (21% higher than in 2008).



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- 1.3.3 The national growth rate is smaller: 12%. The greatest growth will be among those aged 5-9. This group will grow rapidly in the period up to 2018; by that date numbers are projected to be 22% higher than in 2008. It has been estimated that the 0-15 age group will grow by 21% by 2028.
- 1.3.4 Currently out of a population of 1,016,800 in Birmingham 288,000 are children (0-18). Approximately 101,000 are in the 13-19 age range. This is the age group targeted by the City Council's Youth Service. Although most young people in Birmingham go on to achieve well, some 2000 children and young people are known to the Youth Offending Service. In addition 2100 (6.6%) 16-18 year olds are not in education employment or training (NEET). Although improving, Birmingham's teenage pregnancy rate is still significant and white working class boys on free school meals continue to underachieve in school at GCSE level compared with other groups.
- 1.3.5 Today, our young people are facing unprecedented challenges, as nationally, the youth unemployment figure tops one million. One worrying recent development is the evidence that is emerging on a national level of the scale of youth involvement in the recent riots.
- 1.3.6 An interim report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel states 13-15000 people were involved in riots nationally and 4000 have been arrested. $\frac{3}{4}$ of these were aged 24 or under and the largest group were young adults aged 18-24 years. Of children brought before the courts 2/3rds have Special Educational Needs and on average missed one day of school a week. They were also likely to live in the 10% lowest income areas, to be receiving school meals and to have been excluded from school at least once. Only 11% had achieved 5 or more A* to C GCSE grades including Maths and English. A third of the under 18s had not committed a previous offence and the great majority were not considered at risk of offending by the local area Youth Offending Teams. This suggests that a significant number made bad decisions after getting caught up in the moment. Most disturbing was the widespread feeling that some rioters had "no hope and nothing to lose".
- 1.3.7 Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimant rates are 1.5 percentage points higher among 16-24 year olds in riot areas than in non riot areas.
- 1.3.8 Some costs when things go wrong for young people, have been estimated as:
- Being in a Youth Offending Institution: £100,000 pa;
 - Cost of Prosecution: £30,500 pa;
 - Cost of stabbing: £300,000;
 - Cost of shooting: £1.2 million;
 - Being in Care: £40,000 pa;
 - Being Homeless: £25,000; and
 - Being unemployed: £ 3000 pa on JSA alone.



- 1.3.9 It has long been recognised that high quality youth work; advice, guidance and support can play a positive role in improving the outcomes for young people but to properly compare like with like, the key challenge is knowing how far youth services actually help avoid such costs arising for the state.

1.4 What is Youth Work?

- 1.4.1 Youth work is diverse as it seeks to respond to a wide range of different young people's needs so it can be defined in a number of ways some of which are set out below.
- 1.4.2 Youth work is an educative process, offering young people a broad range of activities, experiences and support, aimed at stimulating their interests and abilities and being responsive of their needs. It is essentially a voluntary activity (young people can choose to engage with it unlike school) requiring skilled adults to facilitate. It makes extensive use of learning by experience and small groups, in settings that vary from youth clubs to mentoring, from sailing to reading. It aims to be accessible to all and reflective of wide cultural and social diversity of the community.

Enhancing skills and learning

- 1.4.3 Youth work aims to:
- Build self esteem and confidence;
 - Develop the ability to manage personal and social relationships;
 - Create learning and develop new skills;
 - Encourage a positive group atmosphere;
 - Build the capacity of young people to consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control;
 - Develop wider horizons and social commitment; and
 - Develop a sense of responsibility for self and community.
- 1.4.4 The core purpose of youth work is the personal and social, development of young people through informal education – linked to this, its purpose is increasingly framed in terms of its contribution to social inclusion. Youth work can also contribute to the development of social capital.

Importance of relationships

- 1.4.5 Young people consistently refer to the ability of the youth worker to establish relationships of trust and respect with them. Through this, and the opportunities it provides for learning, support, group work and challenge, young people report that it has contributed to their increased self confidence, enabled them to make new friends, learn new skills and re-engage with education, make decisions for themselves and improve understanding of others.
- 1.4.6 It is important to recognise that youth work has a distinct (some would say unique) approach to building, developing and sustaining meaningful and productive relationships with young people. It



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is a skilled and long-term process and needs a consistency of intervention by youth workers to be most effective; it can't be done by short term 'parachuting' in and then withdrawing.

- 1.4.7 When the youth workers are closely connected to local communities and services, they can act as a bridge between young people and their families and the services that are established to provide support for them, for example schools, health, social work and youth justice.

Building Resilience and Social Cohesion

- 1.4.8 There is a relationship between the core purpose of youth work – personal and social development and a range of social policy objectives to which it responds. Depending on the social situation of the individual young person, youth work variously contributes to their reintegration, their diversion, their protection and enablement, their level of aspiration and achievement and their active citizenship.
- 1.4.9 A further factor contributing to its impact is youth work's capacity to enable young people to make their own choices and to find their own solutions to problems rather than acting simply to supply information or ready made solutions. Effective youth workers avoid compartmentalising young people's needs. The approach is to look at young people in the round not simply relating to the presenting issue. The mediating role of youth work is an important factor and can as a result strengthen relationships between the young and their local communities. It is therefore suggested that this offers evidence that this approach contributes to public policy goals such as community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.

1.5 Types of Youth Work

- 1.5.1 Youth work is generally carried out in one of three ways, most commonly it is **centre based**. This means it is delivered through clubs and centres which provide a safe and supportive physical environment over which young people can exercise a measure of control. **Street work / detached work** is where youth workers meet with young people in their own chosen environment e.g. on the street, in a café or park etc. **Outreach work** is where workers will engage and consult with young people in order to develop appropriate provision within buildings which responds to these needs.

Universal, Open Access and Targeted Youth Services

- 1.5.2 The House of Commons Education Select Committee report– Services for Young People (June 2011) concluded that although many local youth services have described themselves as universal in nature it would be more accurate to call them open access services. This is because they are open to all who wish to attend but they are located in particular areas, often of disadvantage, and they are arguably targeted in a geographical sense.
- 1.5.3 Targeted services seek to direct often intensive and time limited provision to those who are deemed most in need or disadvantaged.



- 1.5.4 Open access work continues to fulfil an important function in providing opportunities for young people's personal and social development particularly in areas where there is little other provision.
- 1.5.5 More recently targeted work with at risk young people has attracted greater proportions of youth service budgets. There is evidence that local authorities are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain a balance within finite resources. The Select Committee argued that these are different forms of provision and are mutually supportive and that there are clear dangers in allowing open access work to decline.



2 The Youth Service in Birmingham

- 2.1.1 The aim of the Birmingham Youth Service is to provide young people with enjoyable opportunities and challenging experiences together with information, support and guidance in order to enable them to achieve and develop their skills, abilities, self-esteem, values and identity in their transition to adult life.
- 2.1.2 The service impacts on the youth population, defined as 11-25, but with a specific focus on 13-19 year olds.
- 2.1.3 The Service operates on an open access basis and is available to any young person who chooses to use it. The service seeks to provide a comprehensive geographical spread of centres and projects across the city. However there are gaps in coverage in certain parts of the city.
- 2.1.4 Within the various centres, clubs and projects the service targets young people who are in need of most support by encouraging participation and inclusion (e.g. teenage pregnancy programmes, preventing extremism work, drugs work, tackling anti-social behaviour and employment initiatives).

Birmingham Youth Service Curriculum

- 2.1.5 The purpose of the Youth Service Curriculum is to offer young people the opportunity to develop skills, confidence, knowledge and understanding to enable them to become more empowered individuals with the ability to make informed choices. As a result it is believed that they will be more able to make a contribution to their community and society as a whole.
- 2.1.6 Its core principles are:
- To educate;
 - To participate;
 - To empower/ develop responsibility;
 - To enjoy; and
 - To promote equalities.
- 2.1.7 It states that the youth work process is a combination of:
- Building trust;
 - Informing;
 - Advocating;
 - Supporting;
 - Challenging; and
 - Respecting.



- 2.1.8 It has an established curriculum which states that work with young people is generally a combination of proactive work and reactive work.
- 2.1.9 Methods include:
- Encouraging young people to actively participate in decision making;
 - Ensuring that they have access to facilities and services providing relevant information about issues that affect their lives;
 - Enabling young people who share common issues to work together whilst developing their understanding and resilience;
 - Enabling young people's views to be heard and ultimately enabling them to represent themselves and effect change; and
 - Encouraging young people to volunteer within their community.
- 2.1.10 This is delivered through a combination of local clubs and centres, outreach work and detached work.
- 2.1.11 Current issues in young people's lives that the Youth Service has prioritised are:
- Drug and alcohol education;
 - Sexual health;
 - Physical and mental health;
 - Family and relationships;
 - Homelessness;
 - Community safety;
 - Social exclusion reduction;
 - Community cohesion;
 - Creating opportunities for achievement recognition;
 - Building self esteem; and
 - Informal education programmes to develop learning opportunities.



2.2 What Does the Youth Service Cost?

2.2.1 The following table outlines how the budget available for the service has contracted since 2008/09.

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
£7,542,563	£6,999,514	£6,084,000	£4,784,000	£4,784,000
	Reduction of 7% on previous year	Reduction of 13% on previous year	Reduction of 21% on previous year	No reduction on previous year
	Accumulative reduction of 7%	Accumulative reduction of approx 20%	Accumulative reduction of approx 37%	Accumulative reduction of 37%

2.2.2 Currently the budget is funded from a combination of mainstream funding and Early Intervention Grant.

2.2.3 For some years it has not been possible to directly compare levels of spending on the Youth Service in Birmingham with that of other local authorities, as many, including Birmingham, had merged their Youth Service provision into their Integrated Youth Support Services. This combined a number of other services for the benefit of young people (such as the Connexions Service and Youth Offending Teams). However when the last National Youth Agency annual audit was conducted in 2007/08 it indicated that Birmingham was ranked:

- 82nd out of 118 in terms of spending per head on 13-19 year olds. The spend in Birmingham was at that time £71 per head when the national average was £84; and
- 99th out of 110 in terms of percentage of total education expenditure on youth services. The spend in Birmingham was 0.73% when the national average was 1.4%.

2.2.4 It is clear that future spending on youth services by local authorities is under considerable pressure and many authorities including Birmingham, have chosen to significantly reduce or cut altogether budgets for this type of provision.

2.3 The New Model of Provision from 1 April 2012

2.3.1 Going forward, in view of both recent budget reductions and the need to work more closely with the Integrated Family Support Teams (IFSTs) the service is currently being remodelled as follows;

Service Hubs:

2.3.2 These will be major centres of youth work activity, providing services seven days a week for young people. Currently there are nine buildings identified as Service Hubs, with **two new builds** being built through the **Myplace** initiative. They are all buildings that, although varying in size, are



capable of providing a range of services, delivered by both Youth Service staff and external partners. They will provide universal prevention services and targeted interventions, acting as centres of excellence in collaboration with Third Sector organisations and a range of current and new partners. The Hubs will host teams of youth workers and staff from partner agencies, and will deliver a number of different services. Staff will work both in the centres, and also across the local neighbourhood, including schools.

Centre	Ward	Constituency
Concord Youth Centre	Sparkbrook	Hall Green
The Pump	Shard End	Hodge Hill
H10 Naseby Youth & Community Centre	Washwood Heath	Hodge Hill
H1 My Place Aston	Aston	Ladywood
E R Mason Youth Centre	Ladywood	Ladywood
My Place Northfield	Northfield	Northfield
Maypole Centre	Brandwood	Selly Oak
Clifton Road Youth Centre	Sutton Vesey	Sutton
The Vibe	South Yardley	Yardley

Satellite Clubs and Projects

2.3.3 These will be managed from the Hubs, and will enable staff teams to reach out into surrounding areas to provide youth work through detached work, information projects, one or two evening a week youth clubs, and targeted programmes tackling specific local issues. These more targeted services will all be located in wards that are identified as having the highest levels of socio-economic deprivation and social need. They will be provided through information advice and guidance projects/information shops, outreach and detached projects, school based youth work, youth clubs, and holiday and weekend projects in particular neighbourhoods and estates.

Centre	Ward	Constituency
Out Central	Ladywood	Citywide
Astral Centre	Tyburn	Erdington
Learning Curve	Sparkbrook	Hall Green
Kings Heath Youth Club	Moseley and Kings Heath	Hall Green
Moseley School ARC Project	Springfield	Hall Green
Tysley Community Centre	Springfield	Hall Green
Sparkhill Youth Project	Springfield	Hall Green
Hutton Hall Girls Group	Washwood Heath	Hodge Hill
Norton Hall	Washwood Heath	Hodge Hill
Bordesley Green Detached Project	Bordesley Green	Hodge Hill
Ladywood Community Health Centre	Ladywood	Ladywood
Nechells Green Youth Club	Nechells	Ladywood
Milebrook Hall Youth Club	Bartley Green	Edgbaston
Victoria Youth club	Northfield	Northfield
Masefield & Chaddesley	Bourneville	Selly Oak



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Centre	Ward	Constituency
Detached youthwork Project		
St Francis Youth Project	Bournville	SellyOak
The Den Youth House	Brandwood	SellyOak
Kings Heath Detached Project	Moseley and Kings Heath	Hall Green
Sutton YMCA	Sutton Trinity	Sutton Coldfield
Fox Hollies Forum	Acocks Green	Yardley
'Green Door' (Wryley Birch Youth Project)	Kingstanding	Erdington
Radleys Project	Sheldon	Yardley
Sheldon Youth and community Centre	Sheldon	Yardley
Young Peoples Health Project	Shard End	Citywide

*The above list may be subject to adjustment

Local Youth Centres

2.3.4 These will be free standing centres for youth work, which would not be part of the Hub network due to their location and their proximity to satellite provision. All of these buildings provide valuable and accessible local services to young people.

Centre	Ward	Constituency
Frankley Youth Centre	Longbridge	Northfield
Three Estates Youth project	Kings Norton	Northfield
Shard End Youth Centre	Shard End	Hodge Hill
Soho Youth Projects	Soho	Ladywood
Small Heath Youth Centre	Nechells	Ladywood
Malcolm Locker Youth Centre	Erdington	Erdington
Base K/S	Oscott	Perry Barr
610 Youth Project	Oscott	Perry Barr
Lozells Recreation Group	Lozells and East Handsworth	Perry Barr
641 Youth House	Selly Oak	Selly Oak
Falcon Lodge Youth Club	Sutton Trinity	Sutton Coldfield
The Square Club	Weoley	Northfield
Oakland Centre	Handsworth Wood	Perry Barr

2.3.5 Included in the new model of delivery set out above there are 48 'units' of delivery, operating out of 43 different buildings across the city. There is a complex variety of arrangements, from buildings that the service 'owns' and manages, to those which are owned and managed by other City Council Directorates, and those which belong to third sector organisations, private landlords and schools. It should be stressed that the purpose of the new model is to increase flexibility and responsiveness within the service. An outcome is likely to be that the number and nature of these projects will change and hopefully increase over the coming months and years.

2.3.6 A map of overall provision is attached as **Appendix 2**.

2.3.7 The key areas of change to the service as a result of the introduction of the new model and the differences these will make are set out below:



- **The role and purpose of the Service** will shift away from the current model of straightforward Local Authority open access youth service delivery. There will be greater focus on targeted work, more work with the most vulnerable young people in our city, and in areas of higher deprivation and levels of need.
- **The location and role of youth workers will change.** Key staff will be moved to form teams based in Hubs in order to increase flexibility within the workforce; encourage greater sharing of skills and expertise; be better suited to managing satellite provision; and lead to an increased capacity to develop new work in neighbourhoods and support Third Sector organisations.
- **Youth workers will shift the emphasis of their work towards more targeted work with the most vulnerable young people,** and be required to deliver both Independent Advice Guidance (IAG) to individual young people in need, and information on positive activities to young people, broadening choice and engagement, and giving them greater power and influence over decisions which affect them.
- Youth workers will be able to undertake more direct face to face work with young people, as the responsibilities for building management are reduced substantially.
- **The number and nature of the buildings** will reduce and change. The service is committed to reviewing the number of buildings from which it operates seek alternative management and funding, including transfer to the Third Sector, (where it is appropriate and possible to do so).
- **The scale of the service has reduced over recent years.** The Youth Service has however retained a significant presence across the city, and is undertaking more work to ensure the quality of the service is maintained, and to develop partnerships and alternative models of funding.
- **The role of managers will change, to include a more strategic, area or neighbourhood role** that will require them to determine need and bring together appropriate partners to meet it. They will be required to operate as managers of remaining LA provision, but more importantly to reposition the Youth Service as a strategic agent at city wide and local level.
- **A redefinition of the relationship between the Youth Service and partners,** using a variety of methods in a more flexible and creative model of delivery. This will involve the Service supporting the Third Sector to develop infrastructure and capacity.
- **An increased emphasis on the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers.** The Service is developing a Volunteering Strategy intended to encourage and support local people to take an active involvement in their local youth projects, supported by professional youth work staff and managers.
- **There will a far greater emphasis on income generation** within the service, as the need to generate funding for core activities increases. Work will be undertaken to evaluate the



potential benefits of establishing co-operatives, Community Interest Companies, Mutuels and Social Enterprise organisations in partnership with key players in the voluntary and private sector.

2.4 Staffing and Service Delivery

2.4.1 The Service has reduced the size of the workforce over the last two years. The workforce needed for the implementation of the Hub and Spoke Model includes; A Head of Service, 2 Deputies, 4 Area based Youth Officers, 2 Central Youth Officers, a workforce of 53 youth workers, and other delivery staff, delivering work with young people. Also needed are part-time youth workers, who work from as few as 6 hours a week, to over 20 hours, as well as support staff, providing clerical, administrative, cleaning and other support services to face to face workers in projects and to central management teams.

2.4.2 All professional youth workers have recognised JNC qualifications. Birmingham adheres to the National Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Report, which means that it recognises the need to employ professionally qualified youth workers in full time youth worker posts.

2.5 How Well Does the Service Perform?

2.5.1 Currently the service measures its performance using a combination of output measures relating to attendance and learning outcomes achieved by young people. To assess the quality of the service it conducts a regular users survey.

2.5.2 In 2010 /2011 total attendances at centres and projects for 11-25 year olds were 225,642. For 13-19 year olds this was 185,656 and the services contacted 18,115 individuals.

2.5.3 The gender split of attendances is 69% boys to 31 % girls. The ethnic breakdown of users is 33% Asian/Asian British, 14% Black/Black British, 8% mixed race 39% white and 6% other.

2.5.4 As well as attendances the service gathers the following data:

- **Recorded outcomes** – In 2010/11: 6,640 young people (13-19 year olds) gained a recorded outcome. Recorded Outcomes are agreed between youth workers and the young person, and are a record of skills learnt, knowledge gained and progress achieved. The criteria can vary greatly due to the range of young people that are worked with, but must include an element of progress for the young person in terms of personal and social education.
- **Accredited outcomes** – In 2010/11: 1,556 (13-19 year olds) gained an accredited outcome. The crucial difference between recorded and accredited outcomes is that accredited must be externally evaluated achievements (such as Duke of Edinburgh Award, a Referees certificate, a coaching award, an Arts Award, driving test etc.). The elements of personal and social development must still be evident, and the role of the youth worker central to the achievement, but the assessment is external to the Youth Service.



2.6 Results of Service Users Satisfaction Survey

2.6.1 The Youth Service conducts a satisfaction survey every two years. A questionnaire is completed by young people who use the service. The latest survey was conducted in late 2011, with 941 young people completing and returning the questionnaire.

2.6.2 A full report on the findings is available on request. Some of the results indicate that:

- Despite reductions in service budgets, there has been an improvement in satisfaction ratings since the last survey in 2009;
- 97% of respondents rated the activities at their youth centres as excellent or good;
- 99% of respondents rated the staff/team at the youth centre as excellent or good;
- 28% of respondents stated that as a result their attending Youth Service provision they felt better about themselves; and
- 24% stated that one of the outcomes for them of attending their youth provision was that they had learned about responsibility.

2.6.3 When asked to indicate what opportunities users have to get involved in the decision making at their centre, 85% of respondents felt that they have had the opportunity to get involved in decision making within their centre/project and beyond.

2.6.4 Other results indicate that:

- An interesting and varied curriculum of activities, that provide a range of new and fun opportunities, coupled with the safe and welcoming environment that youth workers create, are the key reasons that young people say they attend Youth Service provision.
- Young people ranked having fun, new experiences meeting new friends and learning new skills as the main outcomes that they got from youth provision.
- Over half (51%) said that their involvement in their youth project had led to other positive opportunities.
- 50% of respondents identified Facebook as the best way for the service to communicate with them, and keep them informed. Interestingly, a letter was identified as the second most popular response, with 20%.

2.7 Scrutiny Review of Birmingham's Youth Service Conducted in 2006

2.7.1 The review concluded that the service provided some excellent examples of youth work on the ground being delivered by highly committed staff often with young people who have significant



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barriers to realising their potential. However provision was not universally available across the city and there were some significant gaps in some areas of the city. It noted that the service was involved in a number of partnerships with both statutory and voluntary agencies but there was potential to enhance this. Some partners felt that the level of engagement at a local level was variable and there was a need to be more explicit about the role and structure of the service.

2.7.2 The report found that the voluntary and community sector in particular had expressed concern at the lack of engagement at a strategic level and identified a lack of support in some areas of the city. It was felt that the two sectors are not being developed as a single youth service and there is an inconsistency in the partnership working at a local level. It also identified the need for closer working with Constituencies. It should be noted that since this report was published in 2006 there have been substantial changes to the staffing structures and roles within the constituency teams.

2.7.3 Five roles for the Youth Service in Birmingham were suggested:

- A commissioning role focussed on securing youth work and ensuring the quality of delivery;
- A facilitation role supporting other providers to secure positive outcomes for young people;
- A role to engage with and encourage the participation of young people;
- An advocacy role enabling policy makers to connect with young people; and
- Supporting young people to connect with their peers and the wider community.

2.8 Birmingham Youth Service Inspection 2007

2.8.1 The most recent OFSTED report of the service was produced in 2007. It concluded that Birmingham had an adequate Youth Service and overall the service provided satisfactory value for money.

2.8.2 It stated that young people's achievement and the quality of youth work practice are both adequate. Relationships between workers and young people were nearly always good and Area Youth Officers provided effective leadership. Efforts to increase the involvement of young people were proving successful. It noted that the curriculum was broad though more work needed to be undertaken with some of the key target groups the local authority has identified as priorities. The service had a particularly strong provision for promoting cultural diversity. In several areas, such as partnership working, management was not sufficiently strategic. Useful management information was being generated but is not always used well. While the service knew where its most and least effective work was located, it did not measure its cost effectiveness rigorously.

2.8.3 One particular strength of the service was noted as being the fact that it was making a positive difference to the lives and aspirations of some of the city's most vulnerable and hard to reach young people.

2.8.4 It recommended some areas for development as follows:



- Manage the service more strategically;
- Develop more accountable and productive partnerships;
- Make better use of the management information the service is now collecting; and
- Measure the impact of the work more effectively.

2.8.5 It found that a broad curriculum was provided with a good balance between general club activities and targeted work. However a more strategic lead is needed to ensure the overall programme accurately reflects service wide priorities. It noted that, the service was working with nearly twice as many young men as young women (63% male to 37% female). It stated that if this situation has arisen unintentionally, rather than as a planned response to a service-wide needs analysis, then the imbalance needs either redressing or explaining.



3 Evidence

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 We undertook this inquiry in order to gain a detailed understanding of both the current provision and new proposals for the delivery of the City Council's Youth Service. We carried out a series of visits to various projects across the city and we spoke directly to young people in order to capture their opinions and views. We also wanted to see how this fitted together with both other statutory and voluntary services in the city and how Birmingham's offer to young people fits with government policies and national thinking. Our findings from the evidence sessions are set out below.

3.2 Visits to Youth Projects around the City

3.2.1 We were keen to have a close look at the broad range and variety of youth provision that the City Council currently runs and a significant programme of visits to 13 projects was undertaken. We took the opportunity to speak to both the young people and youth workers within their projects to get their views on both the current provision and the proposals for the service going forward. Descriptions of a selection of different projects we visited are outlined below:

Malcolm Locker Youth Centre

The centre is located on the Lyndhurst Estate in Erdington and is the only community provision on the estate.

It is currently open five days a week and sessions take place both throughout the day as well as early evenings. The centre is a one stop shop for a range of different activities and workers pride themselves on providing an all round service for the young people. "It's not just about the pool table and providing the young people with a safe and accessible space to hang out in, it's also about providing them with the support and guidance they may need in other areas of their lives".

The centre runs a number of projects, some of which are listed below.

NEXT STEPS Project

This is a structured project delivered in partnership with a local training provider which supports young people who are not in education, employment or training. The young people are provided with one to one support in looking for a job, help with interview costs, CV sessions, interview skills etc.

One to One This is a project open to any young person who needs help and support. It operates on an appointment basis and enables young people to talk to the youth worker about any specific issues they may have, ranging from a young person facing being made homeless, legal advice, help with application forms, basically anything that they need help with, the youth workers try to support them.



Unique Chaos

This is a project targeting younger children and it has included a photography project for the youngsters and they also had the chance to try their hand at urban orienteering.

We were told by the young people we met at the centre:

“It’s a safe place to go”.

“It has a really positive and welcoming atmosphere”.

Clifton Road Youth Centre

The Clifton Road Youth Centre, located in Sutton Coldfield is the only City Council funded provision within the ward.

It has a detailed programme of activities taking place throughout the whole week, including performing arts, music, skateboarding and keep fit, but it also provides a whole range of advice, guidance and signposting on such areas as Homelessness, financial problems, careers, family problems, and health.

The young people we met were really keen to debunk the myth that as Sutton was a relatively well-off and affluent area, where the young people living there faced no real problems or hardships.

“We need support and guidance just like any other young person from across the city”.

We were shown around by two young people with autism who we were able to develop their communication skills by attending youth club. We also met another young person who was only able to communicate using a keyboard but found attendance at youth club enjoyable.

We were struck by the real sense of community within the centre, the young people had built strong relationships, not just with the staff, but with each other as well. There was a real sense of pride and ownership that came through very strongly.

Longbridge Myplace New Build

The Longbridge Myplace building once completed will be one of two state of the art purpose built youth centres within Birmingham.

This is one of the largest youth projects in the country and young people have been involved from the very start.

We met with “Myplace Young People’s Forum” which is made up of representatives from local schools and was created to progress the design plans and encourage a sense of ownership from the start of the project. The youngsters told us about a number of different problems they have faced during the course of the



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project such as issues around the use of land, changes in staff etc but they've tried to stay positive throughout.

What came across most strongly as the enthusiasm and commitment shown by the young people for "their" youth centre. They felt the building had to have the wow factor to impress people coming into the area.

One of the key aspirations for the project was that the building should feel like "a safe space". They achieved this by working with the architects to design a building that has no corridors as such but instead has a light and airy feel to the structure.

The young people visited other Myplace buildings across the UK for ideas and inspiration.

Myplace will house conference facilities to help in generating revenue for the upkeep of the building. It will also house a music studio, sports facilities and support for enterprise.

One of the highlights of the visit was seeing the young people do a role play exercise in which they recreated 2 scenarios for the group. This centred on their version of a badly chaired meeting and what they thought a good meeting should be. The exercise was very well thought out and also extremely funny. It had educational value and it opened their eyes as to how to conduct meetings with different views expressed.

Calthorpe Detached Project

The young people at the project met in a small space located within the changing rooms of the Calthorpe Park football club in the Balsall Heath area of the city.

What was striking was the fantastic relationship they had built up with their youth worker, we were told that this was one of the main reasons they turned up on a regular basis. He was able to offer them advice and guidance on a whole range of issues including job opportunities, issues at school, homework etc.

What came across to us was the real sense of ownership. They saw it as "their space" and one young person summed it all up by saying "it's not about what it looks like, it's a safe place I can come along to".

This was echoed by all of the young people we met, in fact one young man had come straight from work, he hadn't even gone home first, as he knew he could see all of his friend and just "chill out" for a couple of hours first.

The group was very proud of carrying out a host of fund raising events to generate monies for the activities they took part in. They organised a trip to Manchester which involved visiting one of the largest Indian restaurants in the north of England followed by a trip to the Manchester United Football ground.



Shard End Youth Project

Is a purpose built youth centre located in the east of the city which is used mainly by young people living very close to the centre. It has recently undergone a refurbishment and the young people had a key role to play in its new design.

They met with the design team and came up with lots of great ideas for the space, we all felt it was a really welcoming and well thought out use of space and were particularly impressed with the cinema room and the karaoke!

A number of the young people who started coming here as kids, have now returned as volunteers.

The centre also has a motorbike workshop where the young people have the chance to build and fix motorbikes whilst at the same time gaining practical knowledge of mopeds and motorbikes (basic mechanics, safe driving skills etc).

We were also impressed with the confidence shown by the young people we met on the day who told us:

“I come to the centre three times a week – we’re a big family here”.

“Coming here has really helped me at school”.

“I’ve made lots of new friends and I’ve had the chance to do things that I wouldn’t otherwise get the chance to do”.

3.3 Overall Impressions of the Service from the Visits

3.3.1 The City Council runs a great variety of positive and educational activities at its youth centres and clubs across the city. All of this is developed to suit local and young people’s needs at relatively low cost. Projects run from a hugely variable quality of premises, from purpose built state of the art centres like Myplace, to what are essentially little more than changing rooms at the Calthorpe detached project. However the existing pattern of City Council youth service provision has grown up historically and is not evenly spread geographically, with some areas of the city having very few City Council youth facilities.

3.3.2 We were particularly impressed with the dedication of staff and the passion of young people attending the projects. Time and again the young people stressed the importance of the relationships they were able to form with the youth workers at the centres and how influential these had been in their lives. Another key message that came across very clearly was the importance young people placed on having a safe place to go. Many young people also told us about the many opportunities they had had to try out new activities, learn new skills and link up with help and support from other services (such as Connexions and Health projects) through their involvement at the youth club, which they would not otherwise have access to. They stressed that these opportunities had increased their personal levels of confidence as well as allowed them to make new friends.



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- 3.3.3 We were interested to hear about the high level of volunteering that went on in the projects. We even heard of examples where youth workers and volunteers had come back to work in the system after being a user of the centre in their teens.
- 3.3.4 We were told about the efforts that were being made to fund raise by both workers and young people to enable them to improve the centres and to pay for trips. Young people also took advantage of the many chances to get involved in helping to plan and decide on activities.
- 3.3.5 Although efforts were being made to address it, we got the impression that many, although not all projects, were dominated by boys and we felt that more needs to be done to ensure a more balanced gender mix of users of the service. In some centres for example Lozells (which has a high level of Asian usage) more female workers or volunteers are needed so that links can be made with parents to encourage them to allow girls to attend.
- 3.3.6 We were concerned to hear in some centres that few links existed with local Members, these need to be strengthened and efforts made to engage proactively. In some constituencies it was clear that more could be done to enhance working on a locality basis.
- 3.3.7 We were also unclear to what degree the service had a strategic overview of the split between detached and outreach work, and centre based activities, and the rationale for this.
- 3.3.8 Although many of the centres produced newsletters about their activities these did not seem to be widely distributed and in general we were of the view that the service could be more proactive in promoting both these and its broader aims and achievements. The service lacks a clear identity and marketing strategy. There is little or no branding.
- 3.3.9 During our visits we heard, on the one hand, concerns raised by some young people about the impact of the introduction of the new model of provision, and fears that this may result in a loss of provision at their own centre. We were also told that whilst some young people were impressed by the facilities that might be available at the new Myplace projects, they would not use them because they were too far away. They also felt it was unfair that all the money was being spent on two state of the art centres, when the smaller centres had very few facilities. On the other hand we also saw the level of effort that had been made to engage a group of young people on an ongoing basis in all aspects of the design and development of the Longbridge Myplace project.
- 3.3.10 We were concerned to hear about the postcode limitation of some young people- that is, an inflexible attitude to moving across the city. We believe that work needs to be done to address this and in particular with the Myplace projects, efforts must be made to breakdown barriers- the centres must be inclusive and open to all in the wider area . In Aston this will include considering security and safety issues. Without this the long term sustainability of the projects may be in doubt.



3.3.11 Some of the activities available at the different centres are set out below.

Abseiling Canoeing Rock climbing Cricket Ice skating Bowling Football Residential trips	Job Searches Interview practice Help with CV's Enterprise Support Benefits Advice First Aid Health and Safety	Film Making Music Drama Dance Poetry Arts and crafts
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3.3.12 Along with the activities listed above, we were very pleased to see a whole host of specialist support being provided to the young people at some of the centres including one to one support sessions, advice and guidance on maintaining tenancy agreements, counselling services, raising awareness of the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol and support regarding relationships and sexual health. We also came across support groups for girls, children in foster care, young deaf people and lesbian and gay support groups.

Young People's Views

"Our area has a bad reputation but this centre is something positive in the heart of our community".

"I've moved away from the area but I still come here every week even though I've got to get two different buses to get here".

"I've made friends with people from different cultures; I don't think I would've done that if the centre wasn't here, I'd just be hanging around in the park with my mates".

"I come here to meet up with my friends in a safe place."

"It's a safe and friendly environment, we're like family here".

"I can chill here, get involved in activities, entertain myself, play, help and support others".

"It's really helped me at school, I've become so much more confident since I've started coming to the centre".

"It's not just kids from the local area that come to our centre, we've got people from across the city that come to the centre".

"keeping it open access will give everyone a chance".

"Why can't they use the centre for targeted work in the day time and keep it open at night".



"You can disadvantage the advantaged young people by focusing more on targeted groups".

"If the centre closed, we'd be all out on the streets doing nothing".

"When I'm at home I get depressed—coming here makes me feel better"

3.4 Consultation with Young People

3.4.1 We were keen to ensure the voices of young people would be heard as fully as possible, as part of this review and to ensure this a number of different approaches were employed. In addition to the visits to youth projects set out above where we spoke to young people attending the sessions on the night, we also commissioned a series of focus groups with 132 young people from 9 different youth projects across the city. The aim here was to consult directly on the proposals for the new hub and spoke model of provision. This culminated in a joint session with members so that young people could feed back the results of the exercise directly. Full details of the focus group findings are attached at **Appendix 3**.

3.4.2 In addition a survey was undertaken by our Voice is Power representatives to explore the views of young people who do not currently use youth service provision.

Feedback from the Young People's Focus Groups

3.4.3 Young people wish to retain an open access service as much as possible – they felt young people need support at different times in their lives and will possibly ultimately be targeted as at risk if they were not able to access a service.

"To me, a more targeted youth service is one which is closing doors to youth. Open access will give everyone a chance".

3.4.4 In addition many young people felt that if there was no service available to them they might find themselves in trouble either because they are bored or because they are out on the streets.

"My mates come here, keeps us off the streets, we learn new skills and mix with different people".

3.4.5 Young people are very positive about their youth centres – highlighting them as safe and friendly places to go, where they learn new skills, get support build their confidence and are able to experience a range of different activities they would not otherwise be able to access or afford.

"It's a supportive environment, it's somewhere I won't be judged".



3.4.6 Youth workers are seen as an essential element of the success of the service provided.

“The youth workers are a positive role model for us”.

3.4.7 All of the young people felt that there were good mechanisms in place to involve them in decision making within their clubs but only a few felt that they had much influence outside this.

“We would like a website where we can communicate with young people from across the city”.

“Use Facebook or Twitter more to give information to young people, if we’re not here (youth club) we’re on Facebook”.

Feedback from Voice is Power (VIP)

3.4.8 The VIP representatives on the Committee have collated information from young people who do not attend traditional ‘youth clubs’. This was presented at the full Committee meeting in December 2011.

3.4.9 An online survey was created and the link was sent to young people within schools, colleges and places of learning. A link on the VIP website was also included and information was shared over Facebook and Twitter.

3.4.10 The main finding of the questionnaire was that the young people who responded did not currently use City Council youth facilities as they were not aware of projects within their area so had not ‘thought of attending’.

3.4.11 Of the range of activities which they identified they take part in ‘hanging out with friends’ was a common pastime – however they also said a youth club would be a good place to meet friends.

3.4.12 The survey also asked young people to identify a list of activities they would be interested in taking part in – many of these are currently on offer across existing youth projects in the city.

3.4.13 The main conclusion of the survey was that young people who do not currently attend would attend if they were aware of projects in their areas.

3.4.14 VIP representatives concluded:

“The Youth Service offers lots of opportunities for us to take part in a wide range of activities, learn new skills, meet friends and contribute positively in the environments we grow up in. However not all young people are aware of these opportunities and we feel the Youth Service needs to promote and raise the profile of the work that takes place as this would enable more young people to be engaged in the service”.



3.5 Youth Service Links with the Voluntary Sector

3.5.1 We met with or received written submissions from a number of voluntary sector organisations which currently work with young people including the Girl Guides and Scouts, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, YMCA, The Pump, Young Disciples, Fairbridge Princes Trust and Birmingham Association of Youth Clubs. We heard a lot about the wide range of different activities and services that are available for young people in the city. We heard that some have very close working links with the City Council Youth Service such as the Pump which is an excellent example of innovative partnership working.

The Pump

The Pump's partnership board is made up of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. It raised the funds required and found the site that would enable young people living in South East Birmingham to design and build their own centre. The £4 million project was completed in 2007. The centre provides young people access to a variety of services including education, skills training, careers advice and information, health advice and support services along with a range of leisure services. It was set up to support the development of all young people, with a focus on supporting those young people who experience isolation and disadvantage.

The organisation has a lease arrangement with the City Council and it currently employs five members of staff and 40% of the running costs come via the City Council, the remaining comes from charity and income generation raised via renting out space within the building. Space is shared with a number of different youth projects e.g. Young Enterprise West Midlands, Film Company, Birmingham Youth Service, Streetgames team, Connexions, on site nursery etc.

The staff at the centre have worked hard to develop relationships with local businesses.

The Youth Service runs a youth club on Mondays and Thursdays, from 6.30pm – 8.30pm for young people aged 11+ years. The Youth Service also provides information on homelessness, employment, training, family & relationships, education, health and sexual health.

The centre is currently working with partners to develop an enterprise support programme for young people.

3.5.2 It is clear that the development of the two Myplace projects will provide valuable assets that can enable more partnership working within an area to develop by encouraging other targeted projects like the Young Disciples to operate from the same building as other youth services. It was recognised by most of the organisations we met, that in the current economic climate, we have to try to find more creative ways of using the finite resources available. In addition it was suggested we must make our invisible work (with young people) more visible by marketing it better.



Young Disciples

Young Disciples was established in 2001, primarily working with socially excluded young people who may be in danger of becoming gang members. They work with families and young people in need of support relating to issues of anti social behaviour, drugs and criminal activity. There is a real need to engage young people at a younger age to prevent them falling into a cycle of decline and a real need to work with children of school age.

The project receives grants from sources such as the Big Lottery and Barrow Cadbury but recent reductions in funding resulted in the project losing 3 workers.

The project was based in Newtown, Aston but had to move out of the area due to the safety of staff being put at risk. It will eventually move into the Myplace building. However one of the challenges facing workers within the area is the new Myplace building. It will have to work really hard at trying to get kids to come into "the posh building".

There are real sensitivities relating to gang activity and post code boundaries within the area. This can only be overcome if the young people from the different communities have a sense of ownership, so working with the wider community is key to the success of Aston Myplace.

- 3.5.3 We were told about the support given by the Youth Service to organisations like the Scouts. However, the links were less well developed with other organisations such as the Girl Guides and BAYC (Birmingham Association of Youth Clubs) which had set up a Youth Assembly but felt there had been no real opportunity/ avenue to engage with the public sector in a meaningful way.
- 3.5.4 In addition, we heard of one instance where available funding in the region of around £250,000 from the Fairbridge Princes Trust had not been maximised, as the organisation had had difficulties with linking up with the City Council.
- 3.5.5 We were told that a number of youth based organisations in the city recently had their funding cut and that this had put them under financial pressure. We heard that VSC Matters has been commissioned by the directorate for the last four years to support the voluntary and community sector to improve the lives of children and young people in Birmingham. Currently, there are approximately 1400 organisations across the City that form the network and it arranges events on a quarterly basis to bring these organisations together.
- 3.5.6 It is currently in the process of developing a youth service partnership steering group. Efforts are being made to map activities across the city but this is in the early stages of development.



3.6 Youth Service Links with Schools and other Statutory Services

3.6.1 We received written and/ or verbal evidence from Schools, Health projects, Connexions, Youth Offending Service, the Integrated Family Support Team, and the Police. We were keen to consider how well the various services currently worked with the City Council Youth Service and what value these services placed on youth work.

Schools

3.6.2 The head teachers we spoke to told us of some extremely valuable contributions that can be made and preventative outcomes that can be achieved, when there is close working between the two services as set out below:

Frankley School

The school is based in an area of high deprivation, it has falling rolls as it is not the first choice of school within the area. Currently, the Youth Service has access to a dedicated room from which to run a youth club on a daily basis. A dedicated youth worker is based at the school, pupils have access to the youth worker during the school day as well as after school. 30-40 young people attend each session.

The school has large numbers of White working class boys, high levels of deprivation and low levels of educational attainment. Approximately 50% of the children who use the youth facilities can be described as the "problem kids" but it's a place they see as their own.

There is real positive effect on young people who access the provision. It has given them a real sense of pride in their local community as well as raised aspirations.

The relationship between the youth worker and the school is the key. She is aware of the children and their families who may need additional support. This results in good team work. The Youth Service and the school together make the pupils feel like valuable members of the community.

"If the Youth Service pulled out of the school, it would have a huge impact on the local community, there really isn't anything in the area; we're going to end up with lots of kids just hanging around the local parade of shops".

Small Heath School

It is an inner city school with approximately 1375 pupils. It has a Youth club located on the same site as the school on the top floor of the leisure centre. The school behaviour support team is currently dealing with around 50 very challenging young people and the youth worker plays a key supporting role. As he lives within the local community, he has been able to build really worthwhile relationships with the children and relate to them in a way teachers are not always able to. The relationship developed by the youth



worker is very different to that between the pupil and teacher. Young people see youth workers as being on their side, there to support them through any of their issues.

The Youth Service plays a really critical role in the extended schools curriculum, some of the young people have challenging problems and these can sometimes manifest themselves within a school environment and the youth worker has often contributed towards diffusing situations. The youth worker has built up relationships with both the staff at the school, as well as the young people themselves. He has a real hand in preventing suspensions and exclusions of pupils. He works in partnership with the pastoral teams to ensure that young people who are at risk have an added layer of support and encouragement.

The Youth Service has also done a lot of work to encourage girls from the local community to participate in youth activities. To achieve this, they have had to do a lot of work with parents to get them to see the benefits of participation. The Youth Service is a really good bridge in building relationships between parents, pupils and the school.

Broadway School

We also heard of an innovative approach being developed at Broadway School where efforts have been made to keep the school at the hub of the community and using monies secured from Aston Pride to build a purpose built youth and community centre on the school site. As a result of City Council efficiency savings both leisure and the Youth Service have had to pull out their financial support for the project and the school has decided to take on the running of the facility itself. The new community centre opened in January 2011 and is proving very popular. The school has employed a full time community manager, and a team of volunteers play a role in the day to day running of the centre. They have between 40 - 50 different voluntary organisations making use of the facilities on a daily basis and charge some groups but some groups to use the hall for free. A sliding scale of fees and charges is operated. In addition holiday camps are being run for primary school pupils which include intensive tuition classes in Maths, English and Science together with multi sports sessions and healthy lifestyle activities. In the coming year, the school is looking to build further relationships with local community and faith organisations, businesses, the further education sector and local universities.

Other Statutory Services

3.6.3 Both colleagues in the Connexions Service and health projects charged with reducing teenage conceptions in the city also confirmed the value of working in partnership with youth services and how it contributed to helping them to achieve their aims. However, both services cited that further savings targets being experienced by all service areas and changes in government policy (in relation to the changing role of the Connexions service) would impact on their ongoing ability to maintain these links in the future.

3.6.4 We noted that for Connexions in the future there is a significant risk of disconnection between their delivery of higher level targeted support for young people with special needs and those identified as NEET, from the universal careers guidance and pastoral support that will be delivered



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in Schools and Colleges. This is likely to have an impact on the Youth Service which may find itself being drawn into filling some of the gaps left.

3.6.5 The Youth Offending Service (YOS) suggested that links with the Youth Service could be improved by having the Youth Service represented on Custody Panels. Currently the YOS does not have enough mentors for its young people and could see the potential for developing this further perhaps in partnership with the Youth Service.

3.6.6 The Police emphasised the positive value of working with young people in the city and the ongoing need to engage directly in youth projects and programmes:

'It is essential that we do what we can to engage and support young people in Birmingham; youth work has been instrumental in this role. It is however the responsibility of many agencies to assist in this activity. Youth work offers diversionary activities, intervention, outreach and signposting to the other agencies. It is an essential link in the chain that holds together all youth services. Youth work also forms part of the network of information and experience to ensure young people get the best opportunities to thrive'.

(Police Inspector)

3.6.7 However, their links with the City Council Youth Service were extremely variable and ranged from excellent in some areas of the city to almost non-existent in others. A suggestion made by one Police Community Support Officer for improving this was that it would be useful to attend the Youth Service monthly meetings. "This will help to make them aware of our roles and how we can support them with possible funding and participation at their clubs. It would be useful to invite our local youth workers into the station to explain how we can help them and to clarify what their roles are and what areas they cover. This would also help with any multi-agency meetings".

3.7 Links with the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST)

3.7.1 The development of Integrated Family Support Teams is one of the main elements of the new operating model for Children Young People and Families. They will bring together a number of services (including Education Welfare, Targeted Family Support, Youth Inclusion, Youth Work, Connexions, Early Years and Social Care staff) to create an integrated family support service that would effectively fill the gap in family support provision, and be affordable within the reduced budget.

3.7.2 The IFST's are designed to lead and co-ordinate support for young people and families, they are locality based and closely linked with Schools and Children's Centres; and will be able to ensure early identification of needs and early delivery of support for families who do not meet the higher threshold for social care and specialist support.



- 3.7.3 The Youth Service is currently being remodelled to establish greater collaborative working with voluntary sector providers, and to deliver targeted youth programmes and opportunities for young people.
- 3.7.4 It is seen as essential to the IFST that youth workers continue providing youth centres and projects in each locality in order for them to be able to support young people into these arrangements as part of an integrated plan.
- 3.7.5 The Youth Service is, subject to a Service Level Agreement, delivering direct support to the IFST's through their youth workers, and local provisions, being linked to each team.
- 3.7.6 Every youth worker will be involved in delivering targeted interventions including taking the lead professional role in a number of cases; delivering youth programmes within integrated support plans, and signposting and securing young peoples access to appropriate youth activities.
- 3.7.7 £1m of the IFST budget has been allocated to secure these youth work provisions. (equivalent to 29 FTE GR4 posts), and each full time qualified youth worker will assume responsibility for a caseload of referred young people.
- 3.7.8 The new structure will include a total of 54 such posts, therefore the Youth Service will undertake to provide structured and monitored interventions with around 1,350 young people aged 13-19 during a funding year. This equates to an average cost per intervention of £740 per young person. This compares favourably with the costs of the new National Citizenship Scheme, which allocates £1,500 per young person for a structured 12-week programme.
- 3.7.9 We were told there is some tension being created by the requirement for the Youth Service to spend more time and resource targeting services to specific vulnerable young people and the established view of the service for the need for open access services.
- 3.7.10 This is a tension being faced by all Children's and Youth Services, but particularly for the Youth Service and Connexions where their core service design requires universal provision.
- 3.7.11 It is in the nature of youth work that any targeted delivery requires the existence of an established sustainable universal base, to ensure ongoing support and opportunity for young people post intervention, and also to avoid the potential for isolating troubled young people in "problem focused groups" which can often act to simply re-enforce negative behaviours.
- 3.7.12 We were told that the impact of the contribution of the Youth Service to the success of the IFST will be measured and assessed by pre- and post- intervention screening covering client self-assessment against the Every Child Matters and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) aspects. This self-assessment will inform the individual young person's service plan or an integrated action plan under the CAF.
- 3.7.13 In addition to post case evaluations, key stakeholder feedback will be gathered on service impact through regular surveys, and through multi-agency planning and steering groups within each Consortium area.



3.7.14 The Youth Service itself will retain records of their interventions and of levels of young people's engagement.

3.7.15 Each IFST area will include in the work of its planning and steering group, an evaluation of the Youth Service delivery.

3.8 National Policy and Debate on the Value and Future Role of Youth Services

3.8.1 We were keen to explore the key messages that are emerging for national policy debate about the future of youth services and how well the new model of the youth service provision in Birmingham will reflect this. The following section explores this by considering three significant but interconnected areas of debate:

- The importance of youth work in general and value of maintaining an open access as well as targeted youth services;
- Measuring the impact of youth work; and
- The role of local authorities in the provision of youth services.

3.8.2 With public spending under immense pressure, it is vital that the youth sector can actively demonstrate the value that it achieves for young people and society as a whole. Youth services cannot be immune to public spending cuts. However, there have already been significant and in some cases disproportionate cuts to local authority youth services ranging from 20% to 100% in some areas. Further cuts are planned over the Spending Review Period.

The importance of youth work

3.8.3 Positive for Youth - A new approach to cross- government policy for young people aged 13-19 published in December 2011 confirms that the government is passionate about creating a society that is positive for youth. It states that young people matter- They are important to us now, and to our future, and we need them to flourish. **The government is committed to enabling all young people to succeed and realise their full potential. It recognised that young people's experiences outside of formal learning, at home and within their community, are also crucial to enabling them to form and pursue their ambitions and prepare them for life and adult work.**

3.8.4 Key principles underlying the statement are:

- It is positive about young people and rejects negative stereotypes of teenagers;
- It is centred on young people and their needs and aspirations;



- It respects young people's right to have their voice heard - It looks to all areas to follow suit by respecting young people's rights to have their voices heard and by inviting them to audit the quality of local services;
- It seeks to support parents and carers, not ignore or supplant them;
- It is based upon genuine partnership rather than state control and silo working; and
- It empowers and supports local leadership.

3.8.5 The government is committed to narrowing the gap in outcomes between the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people and the rest, while improving outcomes for all young people.

3.8.6 According to Positive for Youth those doing less well include young people in care, disabled young people, young people with SEN, teenage parents and, young people on free school meals. It states that research among young people aged 16 and 17 shows that around 6% of young people are experiencing multiple and complex needs, from a combination of being NEET, having low educational attainment and experiencing emotional health concerns and misusing substances.

3.8.7 It suggests that there is a persistent "educational underclass" of young people who are not helped or challenged sufficiently when early problems appear and who therefore get trapped in a cycle of underachievement and disaffection.

3.8.8 In addition the UK still has amongst the highest level of underage drinking in Europe, particularly getting drunk and binge behaviour. Rates of teenage birth and sexually transmitted infection remain too high.

3.8.9 It states most young people make the transition to adulthood through a combination of supportive parents, good schools and access to opportunities for personal and social development outside the classroom including through high quality youth work. Others find the transition much more difficult.

3.8.10 Some young people are vulnerable because of their backgrounds or personal circumstances or behaviours and find the transition more difficult. Individual young people may move in and out of being at risk of poor outcomes as they develop as their circumstances change.

3.8.11 Youth workers can make a crucial difference to young people's lives, particularly those who are most disadvantaged. They can offer young people high quality opportunities for informal learning and personal and social development and help young people develop the strong aspirations they need to realise their potential. They can identify early any specific and complex problems for which young people need more specialised help. They can listen to young people and build their confidence and skills to make their voice heard in decisions. They can relate to young people with respect, while challenging them to take responsibility.

Supporting the provision of open access services

3.8.12 The House of Commons Education Select Committee states that services for young people have a myriad of aims, but it is an important point of principle that the overall purpose of the service is to



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offer positive activities and enriching personal and social experiences. It is not just a mechanism to divert young people from misbehaviour. This is especially important as 85% of young people's time is spent outside formal education. It stated that local authorities must be reminded that they have a duty to secure young people's access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities which requires them to take account of young people's views and publicise up to date information about the activities and facilities available.

- 3.8.13 Public funding is limited but evidence shows that open access services can sometimes be as effective as targeted ones in reaching those young people that both perform similarly life changing roles in young people's lives and young people move between them. Consequently in determining which services to commission local authority commissioners must recognise that open access services could be more appropriate than a targeted one for improving certain outcomes for young people or that both types may be needed.
- 3.8.14 The government's Positive for Youth report (August 2011) states that local areas will need to consider what balance of targeted services and local centres will best meet local needs. However services are provided, the Government believes that aspirational personal and social development programmes, including investment in young people's capabilities and character through high quality youth work can have a significant impact on young people's life chances and be an important form of early intervention for young people at risk of poor outcomes.
- 3.8.15 This is reflected in a statutory duty for the LA to deliver against Section 507B of the Education Act. This requires the LA to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, young people's access to positive activities; to define a level of sufficiency for such activities; and to engage partners in ensuring that they are delivered. Positive activities are further defined as educational and recreational activities for the improvement of young people's wellbeing for their personal and social development.
- 3.8.16 Good quality open access youth clubs that provide structured activities can be highly effective in meeting priority needs, particularly where they are located in areas where disadvantaged young people are concentrated. They can be hubs through which to offer young people access to a wide range of advice and support services and identify those who may need additional help.

Measuring the impact of youth work

- 3.8.17 Assessing the impact of youth work can be problematic. The pressure from central and local government is to provide evidence of measurable outcomes, related to specific targets. Youth workers, on the other hand, often place more weight on the less tangible personal benefits that young people can gain from involvement in such activities. The two approaches are not necessarily incompatible. For example, involvement in a youth work project can provide young people with an increased sense of community which may contribute to a reduction in the number of recorded anti-social incidents in an area. Similarly, guidance from a youth worker can spur a young person on to securing a college place or becoming involved in work-based learning.



- 3.8.18 The Select Committee report states that in a time of tight spending settlements it is essential that publicly funded services are able to demonstrate what difference they make to young people. Any framework of outcome measures adopted must take account of personal and social wellbeing and young people must be involved in their design.
- 3.8.19 Key areas of youth service that should be developed must provide access to information and advice, opportunities for personal and social development and to volunteering. Local authorities and government need to improve awareness and information sharing to encourage learning from innovation and best practice.
- 3.8.20 The government confirms in Positive for Youth that it wants the quality of services to be judged by good outcomes as well as reductions in poor outcomes. It suggests some key measures of success can be:
- Attainment at age 19 for all young people eligible for free school meals;
 - Participation in education and training or 16 year olds and for 17 year olds;
 - Under 18 conception rates; and
 - The number of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time.
- 3.8.21 The accreditation of youth work and volunteering programmes can provide an assurance of quality.
- 3.8.22 A high quality workforce is central to improving young people's outcomes – with reductions in local authority spending in this area there is a danger that key skills may be lost.
- 3.8.23 In terms of strengthening the evidence base it recognises that a long standing weakness of out of school services for young people has been their limited ability to measure and demonstrate their impact. The Department for Education has commissioned the Centre for the Analysis of Youth Transitions to set standards for evidence. The centre will also analyse against these standards those evaluations which have been carried out on the impact of particular interventions. The standards will be developed in early 2012.
- 3.8.24 The government has also commissioned **Catalyst** to develop a framework of outcomes for young people which it is hoped will become an industry standard common language for the outcomes that services for young people are aiming to deliver.
- 3.8.25 This will highlight the importance of personal and social development outcomes for young people and will aim to develop greater awareness of the evidence that links a number of key personal capabilities (such as confidence resilience and determination) to key longer term outcomes such as those relating to educational attainment and employment.
- 3.8.26 The Select Committee concludes that payment by results is not suited to open access youth provision because many services do not collect appropriate data to measure outcomes, the cohort is ill defined with many people dipping in and out of the service over a period of time and isolating the impact of a single intervention is hard when a service is only one of many influences in young



people's lives. Results are likely to be long term. However there is scope for a form of social bond to be applied at a local authority level, in addition to core spending on youth services by local authorities. Government could encourage social investment in a basket of outcomes for young people in a local area.

3.9 Strategic Role of Local Authorities

- 3.9.1 The Select Committee report supports the principle that Local Authorities should primarily become strategic commissioners of services rather than simply be the default providers of youth services but they may need to consider radical options – for instance converting entire departments into social enterprises as in Kensington and Chelsea or handing management of youth centres to voluntary sector as in Surrey. Rather than simply continuing commissioning those services currently provided, local authorities should undertake a thorough review of what their young people want and need, avoiding duplication and taking account of what else is being provided. Second, the outcomes which services are commissioned must include positive as well as deficit indicators. The involvement of young people in this is key.
- 3.9.2 The government in Positive for Youth agrees that effective and efficient commissioning is the key to maximising the impact of public resources on outcomes for young people and families. **Commissioning is not the same as a decision or process to outsource the delivery of publicly funded services. All services must be commissioned, whether they are to be delivered in house or by a third party. Young people should be involved at every stage of the commissioning process which involves:**
- Understanding outcomes need resources and priorities;
 - Planning - considering different ways outcomes can be achieved;
 - Doing - implementing the plan; and
 - Reviewing - monitoring delivery against expected outcomes
- 3.9.3 It goes on to stress that whether services are provided in- house or externally, and how in- house services are managed, is a matter for local authorities and it believes that the principles and approach set out in this statement offer a credible and viable alternative to simply scaling back existing services to fit available resources. It urges local authorities to look at integrated and partnership approaches to meeting young people's needs, as many are doing to prioritise early intervention for disadvantaged young people and to avoid service reductions which may leave many young people at risk of poor outcomes and drive up costs of specialist services in the future. Planning services strategically around young people's needs rather than existing service structures can help reduce duplication, costs and deliver a more coordinated and coherent offer of support.
- 3.9.4 Local authority leaders and commissioners have a crucial strategic role to listen to and involve young people in assessing needs and making decisions about local services. They have the lead to



bring partners together to design solutions to priority needs based on evidence of what works. They have the statutory duty to secure sufficient leisure – time, educational and recreational activities for young people, to help and encourage young people to participate in education and training, to secure learning opportunities for 16-19 year olds and to secure youth justice services through a youth offending team.

- 3.9.5 Local authorities have a statutory duty to make available information on a wide range of family related services to all parents of children up to age 18. This includes information about local activities, health, education, parenting, financial support and housing.
- 3.9.6 The report states that an approach based on local partnership is the best way to provide young people with more opportunities and better support. It recommends that local councils and other partners involve young people actively to develop their local offer and ensure local facilities and services meet their needs.
- 3.9.7 The government urges every local area to establish and maintain arrangements for ensuring the voice of young people is heard in local decision making, and that young people have a role in inspecting and reporting on the quality of service delivery.



4 Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 At a time of unprecedented financial pressures on local authority spending on services we undertook this inquiry in response to a petition from over 10,000 young people in the city who feared the impact the cuts would make on the City Council's Youth Service provision.

4.1.2 We set out to explore how well youth services were currently being provided, how they were likely to change in the future, and if the new model was going to be sustainable in the face of both additional financial pressures and the need to adapt to new demands and new ways of working.

4.1.3 The key questions we explored were:

- What is the role and purpose of the City Council's Youth Service in Birmingham and how will it be developed and delivered in future, given the changes needed to link with the IFST and reduction in resources available?
- How does the service link up with and complement the youth activities provided by other organisations? and
- How will young people be engaged and involved in the development and evolution of the service going forward?

4.2 Identified Strengths of the Youth Service in Birmingham

4.2.1 Through our evidence taking and visits we found:

- A service that was staffed by a well qualified, committed and passionate workforce operating from extremely variable quality of premises. The young people using the service were bright and hugely enthusiastic about the service;
- A service that provides young people with a network of safe places to go;
- A service that is well respected locally by a number of other statutory agencies including schools;
- A service that because it is open access and predicated upon the voluntary engagement of young people, is able to build the type of special relationships that are necessary to work most effectively with young people;



- A youth work programme that balances educational, recreational and personal skills development opportunities;
- A service that offers real opportunities for the active participation of young people.
- A high level of volunteering; and
- Some pockets of innovation and creative partnership working, such as those established at the Pump and planned for the two Myplace projects;

4.2.2 The new hub and spoke model offers a real opportunity to build closer working in each area of the city between youth workers and the network of centres so that there is greater flexibility, more support, better communication and a wider sharing of best practice between youth workers, although it will lead to a reduction of provision in some places

4.2.3 The links with the IFST's will ensure that youth work has a proper place at the table with other targeted family services provided on an area basis; and

4.2.4 We believe that under the new model the role of the **Area Youth Officers and the Senior Hub Workers (in their neighbourhood role)** will be essential in ensuring the effectiveness of the links between the Youth Service and all other City Council services, voluntary and community sector organisations and statutory agencies in the area.

4.3 Identified Areas of Weaknesses / Limitations

4.3.1 There is currently a lack of strategic overview of all of the services (both statutory and voluntary run and led), activities and resources available to young people across the city. At this time of increasing pressure on budgets and spending across all sectors there is an urgent need for the City Council to facilitate a better linking up of all young people's services in the city in partnership with all other stakeholders and young people to maximise all the available resources and opportunities in each local area/ constituency/ IFST area.

4.3.2 Currently there is little clarity and no mapping of all of the services for young people that are available across the city and even for our own Youth Service there is insufficiently detailed knowledge of users/ non users and a real need to explore what more can be done to increase the balance of usage by girls.

4.3.3 It is unclear what rationale is currently used to set the balance of the Council's Youth Service between centre based, outreach and detached youth work in the city. Going forward the new model of provision will require youth workers to take on responsibility for a case load of referrals from the IFST teams and it is not clear how this work load will impact in practice on the overall balance of the service between open access and targeted work.

4.3.4 Currently working relationships between the Youth Service and parts of the voluntary and community sector, other statutory services and constituencies and localities are patchy and need to be strengthened.



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- 4.3.5 There is also a need to ensure that both the best practice and innovation in partnership working established in some areas of the city is shared more widely.
- 4.3.6 In general the City Council's Youth Service is not well promoted/ or widely recognised and the variety of activities available, the achievements of young people and the scale of volunteering and fundraising are undersold. There is a need for the service to communicate its unique selling point better, as to some non users currently it is seen as "not cool". Young people suggested one way they could help to promote the services was for them to develop their own website.
- 4.3.7 There is a need to be more creative in terms of fund raising and opportunities need to be explored to seek funds both from the private sector and to link into emerging national government pots of money, for example, those aimed at troubled families.
- 4.3.8 We were concerned to hear that some young people have an inflexible attitude to moving across the city. However we also heard from other young people that they would like to have the opportunity to take part in activities that would enable them to mix more with other young people from centres elsewhere in the city. This is an idea that is worth exploring as it could have a beneficial impact on breaking down barriers and building social cohesion, However we recognise that it may prove challenging in some areas. There is clearly a lack of integration across the city and thought needs to be given to what can be done to facilitate more movement across the city to actively promote cohesion.
- 4.3.9 Some concerns were expressed about the Myplace projects and a number of issues were highlighted including:
- the fear that they would receive a disproportionate share of the resources available to the service to the detriment of the other smaller centres;
 - that many young people would not attend because of where they were located (reasons here ranged from them being too far away or the location raising safety concerns; and
 - that they would not be able to generate sufficient income to be sustainable in the long term.
- 4.3.10 The service urgently needs to engage in debate about how to measure, calculate, demonstrate and communicate the contribution of youth work to recognised positive outcomes for young people that goes beyond simple measures of output.
- 4.3.11 Many of the young people we met on our visits felt that they would like to see more contact with local elected members and their youth projects. One way of doing this might be to establish councillor champions for young people in each constituency.
- 4.3.12 Going forward it is unclear to us how the new Hub and Spoke model for the Youth Service and enhanced links to the IFST, which are based around 16 areas, will link up coherently with locality working around wards and constituencies.



Key Conclusions

- 4.3.13 The City Council's Youth Service is about much more than the provision of clubs where young people can play pool and chill out. It has a real purpose which complements and supports educational attainment. However the service operates in a wider landscape of youth provision in the city and to have the maximum positive impact for young people it needs to ensure that all available partnership opportunities are explored and fully utilised.
- 4.3.14 The involvement of young people in all aspects of the service is essential to its success.
- 4.3.15 The Youth Service can also play an essential role in promoting community cohesion and enabling young people to become stakeholders in the city.
- 4.3.16 The new Hub and Spoke model for the Youth Service and IFST need to establish greater links with wards and constituencies.
- 4.3.17 The service is currently being reshaped and redesigned and the impact of this will need to be closely monitored in the future to ensure that it delivers a full range of positive outcomes for all young people in the city.

4.4 Challenges for the Future

- 4.4.1 The City Council will continue to face a series of challenges and choices with regard to future provision of youth services in the city given the ongoing need to reduce expenditure and focus its available resources on the most vulnerable in the city. These include:

Building a strategic vision for youth services in the city

- 4.4.2 In a time of diminishing resources it is essential that there is a clear understanding of the needs for and priorities of every public service area. There are a wide variety of projects, activities and clubs that target young people in the city over and above those provided by the City Council's own Youth Service. It is important that there is some clarity about what is actually available, to ensure that any duplication is minimised and all available resources are maximised. Agreement needs to be reached about what the main purposes of youth services are, how different activities complement each other, and how they should be provided across the city. Some questions that need to be addressed as part of this process include:

- What is the level of entitlement to youth service and provision that we want every young person in Birmingham to access?
- What kind of protected spaces and facilities should young people be entitled to in all neighbourhoods?
- What do we want young people to be able to access in terms of activities, counselling, guidance and mentoring?
- Should a minimum guarantee for young people should be established? and



Birmingham's Youth Service

- How can we increase the direct involvement of young people in decisions around developing and monitoring overall services?

4.4.3 We heard that the Council in partnership with VSC Matters is developing a Birmingham Youth Partnership involving a range of organisations across the City to start building this vision for youth services in the city going forward. This development is welcomed, however, it is important to ensure that all stakeholders including young people and Council Members are fully involved in this process. We recommend therefore, that consideration should be given inviting them to the twice yearly events and standing conferences that are planned.

(Refer to Recommendations 1 -3)

Maintaining a balance between targeted and open access youth provision

4.4.4 Many local authorities have recently been cutting back both on the direct provision of youth services in general or focussing their resources on the provision of targeted services. However, as pointed out by the Government's Education Select Committee, local authorities have a duty to secure young people's access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities which requires them to take account of young people's views and publicise up to date information about the activities and facilities available.

4.4.5 Public funding is limited but evidence shows that open access services can sometimes be as effective as targeted ones in reaching disadvantaged young people; that both perform similarly life changing roles in young people's lives and young people move between them. Consequently in determining which services to commission, local authorities commissioners must recognise that open access services could be more appropriate than a targeted one for improving certain outcomes for young people or that both types may be needed.

4.4.6 In many ways it could be argued that the Youth Service in Birmingham already seeks to target its services within an open access model, as geographically, the majority of centres and projects are located in areas and neighbourhoods with the highest levels of deprivation in the city. In addition, youth workers as part of their work regularly identify groups and individuals for targeted interventions (e.g. one to one work with young people experiencing particular problems such as bullying or bereavement, or groups who are identified as facing specific issues or causing problems such as antisocial behaviour). Finally the service runs targeted planned projects and programmes on specific issues such as teenage pregnancy, drugs work and employment initiatives. The two way links with the IFST teams currently being developed will enable both additional targeted and intensive work to be carried out with specific young people and offer a route for their ongoing support via the open access provision when their programme of direct supported is completed.

4.4.7 Both through our evidence gathering for this review and via the earlier petition young people in Birmingham have indicated their overwhelming support for maintaining an open access youth service in the city. **(Refer to Recommendation 4)**



Considering how best to deliver Youth Services in the city in the future

- 4.4.8 All Council services will have to continue to innovate and explore new ways of working and new models to deliver benefits, if they are to survive in the future. Birmingham's Youth Service is no exception. The need to explore a full range of partnership opportunities available for delivering services to young people will be key to the future evolution of the provision in the city. There has already been initial thinking about the potential to outsource parts of the service and how to make greater use of partnership models or other innovations (such as establishing co-operatives, social enterprises or community interest companies) and no doubt this debate will continue, but it should not be undertaken without a fuller understanding of the needs of all young people in the city being established and a clear mapping of the range of youth services currently available being in place.
- 4.4.9 Once a strategic framework is set there is potential to look to a strengthening of the direct links with constituencies or the benefits that might be accrued from devolution of the service.
- 4.4.10 This report makes no direct recommendations as to whether or not the service should be delivered through constituencies or the Children, Young People and Families Directorate. We do, however note that Council at its meeting on February 12th, 2012 agreed the recommendations of the recent Resourcing Devolution Scrutiny Report. This introduced an annual process by which Executive Members and Constituency Committees identify any budgets which could be devolved to constituencies or wards. We have pointed out earlier the need for strong links to be built between local youth teams and constituencies and the Devolution report introduced the need for both ward and directorate locality champions. We suggest that the Area Youth Officers could be part of this team. **(Refer to Recommendation 5)**
- 4.4.11 In response to some of the current imitations of the service identified earlier in this chapter **Recommendations 6-12** set out some additional suggestions for how the Youth Service might be strengthened and further enhanced going forward. They also set a framework for monitoring overall progress and reviewing specific aspects of the new service model as they bed in.

4.5 Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families works with all partners and young people to establish strategic leadership of all youth activities and services in the city. This should develop a vision based upon an understanding of needs, current provision and gaps in provision across the city. It will also need to establish a framework for setting minimum standards for services as well as monitoring arrangements that may then be used to commission services against.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	June 2013



Birmingham's Youth Service

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R2	That the Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families widens the invitation to the twice yearly Standing Conference of Youth organisations to ensure all groups that have an interest in youth work in the city, young people and Council Members are able to participate. The Cabinet Member should also report back to the Children and Education O&S Committee on the outcomes from these events.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	November 2012
R3	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores opportunities for increasing the involvement of young people in the commissioning and monitoring of youth services to promote access and ensure that their needs are met.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	February 2013
R4	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families confirms a commitment to maintaining a mixed provision of both targeted and open access youth services in the city.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R5	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families ensures that the Area Youth Officers maximise opportunities within the constituencies to build partnerships and enhance locality working by linking up with the Directorate Locality Champions and Ward Champions.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	August 2012
R6	To respond to concerns raised by young people during consultation, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families asks Constituency Chairmen to identify elected Member youth champions at a constituency level.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	September 2012
R7	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families reviews the provision of youth services under the new Hub and Spoke model after twelve months of implementation and also produces a report to the Children and Education O&S Committee highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions taken to ensure the sustainability of the MYplace centres; • The actions taken across the service to build and increase community cohesion; and • The impact and effectiveness of the model in the city. 	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	April 2013



	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R8	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families develops local measures and adopts the frameworks for measuring outcomes from youth work being developed by government.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	June 2013
R9	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families documents and reports back on how the links between the City Councils Youth Service and the Integrated Family Support Teams are operating on the ground.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R10	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families seeks to build upon and share the good practice found in parts of the city to strengthen working links between the Council's Youth Service and other statutory and voluntary and community sector services.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R11	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores new models of youth service delivery and mixed funding streams (such as those utilised by Broadway School and the Pump) and adopts these where possible on a greater scale across the city.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	February 2013
R12	That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families explores opportunities to raise the profile and promote more actively the activities of the City Council's Youth Service. (and if possible the signposting of other youth projects in the city) This could be done -via a dedicated website or other forms of social media run by young people themselves in order to attract more young people to use the service.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012
R13	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Children and Education O&S Committee in October 2012. The Committee will schedule subsequent progress reports thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families	October 2012



Appendices



Appendix One

Visit 1- 6th October 2011

Malcolm Locker Youth Centre

Clifton Road Youth Centre

Visit 2- 17th October 2011

Longbridge MYplace new build

Frankley Youth Centre

Maypole Youth Centre

Visit 3- 3rd November 2011

Concord Youth Centre

Kings Heath Youth Club

Calthorpe Detached Project

The Bus Project

Visit 4- 9th November 2011

The Pump

Shard End Youth Centre

The Radley project

Visit 5- 25th November 2011

Lozells Recreation Group

Aston My Place Building

Nechells Green Youth Project



Birmingham's Youth Service

Witnesses

Attendance at Committee and Review Group Meetings

Harry Fowler

Jane Brown

Tony Gallagher HMI Ofsted

David Wright Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services (CHYPS)

Janice Barnett Girl Guides

Gareth Roberts Scouts

Caroline Anson & Jason Wright BVSC

Robin Thompson Young Disciples

Brian Summers & Charlotte Linforth, The Pump

Habib Ullah, Senior Youth worker Birmingham City Council

Sylvia Parkes Senior Youth worker Birmingham City Council

Ed Wright Area Youth Officer Birmingham City Council

Chris McCabe Young Peoples Health Project

Andy Driver UNITE

Jane Harris Frankley School

Ron Skelton Broadway School

Lin Parton Small Heath School

Helen Davis BEN PCT

Kev Jones Connexions

Dawn Roberts Youth offending Service

John Smail and Andy Jenkins Integrated Family Support Teams (Children, Young People, Families Directorate)

Raymond Douglas Anti Youth Violence



Cheryl Garvey & Les Huhne Birmingham Association Youth Clubs

Adrian Thacker, Adil Hussain, Claire Rigby Princes Trust

Written Evidence

Police

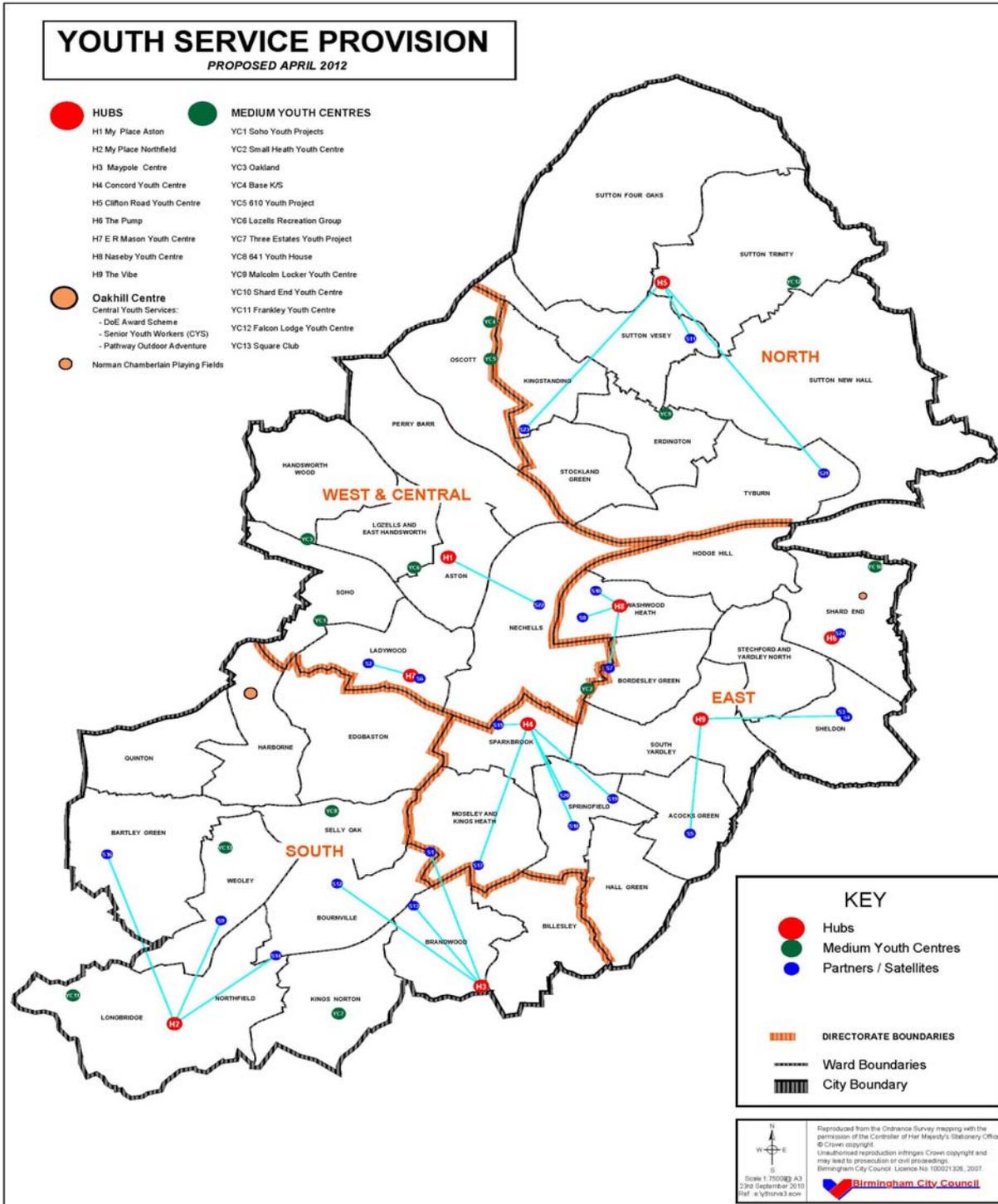
Members

Member input into the review was sought through the initial letter to all Members of the City Council.



Birmingham's Youth Service

Appendix Two



**HUBS (RED)**

H1 My Place Aston
H2 My Place Northfield
H3 Maypole Centre
Idmiston Croft
Maypole
Birmingham
B14 5NJ
Tel: 464 6172
H4 Concord Youth Centre
Claremont Road
Sparkbrook
Birmingham
B11 1LF
Tel: 675 8881
H5 Clifton Road Youth Centre
Clifton Road
Sutton Coldfield
Birmingham
B73 6EB
Tel: 355 2438
H6 The Pump
286 Kitts Green Road
Kitts Green
Birmingham
B33 8NF
Tel: 675 8381
H7 E R Mason Youth Centre
40 Irving Street
Birmingham
B1 1DH
Tel: 622 4570
H8 Naseby Youth & Community Centre
Naseby Road
Alum Rock
Birmingham
B8 3HG
Tel: 464 5044
H9 The Vibe
100 Holder Road
South Yardley
Birmingham
B25 8AS
Tel: 303 6224

**MEDIUM YOUTH CENTRES (GREEN)**

YC1 Soho Youth Projects
Summerfield Centre
Winson Green Road
Winson Green
Birmingham
B18 4EJ
Tel: 464 6316
YC2 Small Heath Youth Centre
Muntz Street
Small Heath
Birmingham
B10 9RX
Tel: 464 0981
YC3 Oakland Centre
Oakland Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 0NA
Tel: 523 7702
YC4 Base K/S
23/25 Kettlehouse Road
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 9JH
Tel: 464 5559
YC5 610 Youth Project
610 Kingstanding Road
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 9SH
Tel: 464 2268
YC6 Lozells Recreation Group
2 Graham Street
Lozells
Birmingham
B19 1QY
Tel: 551 6281
YC7 Three Estates Youth Project
& Information Shop
18 Teviot Grove
Kings Norton
Birmingham
B38 9JX
Tel: 459 9395
YC8 641 Youth House
641 Bristol Road
Selly Oak
Birmingham
B29 6AE
Tel: 471 4745
YC9 Malcolm Locker Youth Centre
Rowden Drive
Lyndhurst Estate
Erdington
Birmingham
B23 5UR
Tel: 382 6932
YC10 Shard End Youth Centre
10 Brownfield Road
Shard End
Birmingham
B34 7HY
Tel: 747 5533
YC11 Frankley Youth Centre
Frankley High School
New Street
Frankley
Birmingham
B45 0EU
Tel: 464 9910
YC12 Falcon Lodge Community Centre
Churchill Road
Sutton Coldfield
Birmingham
B75 7LB
Tel: 675 8144
YC13 Square Club
Sommerford Road
Weoley Castle
Birmingham
B29 5LB
Tel: 475 2893

**PARTNERS/SATELITES (BLUE)**

S1 Kings Heath Detached Project
c/o Masefield & Chaddesley
S2 Ladywood Community Health Centre
Saint Vincent Street West
Ladywood
Birmingham
B16 8RP
Tel: 464 8630
S3 Sheldon Youth & Community Centre
Sheldon Heath Road
Sheldon
Birmingham
B26 2RU
Tel: 675 0566
S4 Radley Project
c/o Sheldon Heath Youth Centre
Sheldon Heath Road
Sheldon
Birmingham
B26 2RU
Tel: 675 0566
S5 Fox Hollies Forum
Greenwood Avenue
Acocks Green
Birmingham
B27 7RA
Tel: 706 0652
S6 Out Central
c/o E R Mason Youth Centre
40, Irving Street
Birmingham
B1 1DH
Tel: 622 4570
S7 Bordesley Green Detached Project
c/o Mirfield Centre
Scholars Gate
Kitts Green
Birmingham
B33 0DL
Tel: 783 6733
S8 Norton Hall
Ralph Road
Alum Rock
Birmingham
B8 1NA
Tel: 464 5044
S9 Victoria Youth Club
Victoria School
Bell Hill
Northfield
Birmingham
B31 1LV
Tel: 475 2893
S10 Hutton Hall Girls Group
1/117 Herrick Road
Alum Rock
Birmingham
B8
Tel: 464 5044
S11 Sutton Y.M.C.A.
Watson Close
St Bernards Road
Sutton Coldfield
Birmingham
B72 1HE
Tel: 354 5614
S12 St Francis Youth Project
Sycamore Road
Bourville
Birmingham
B30 2AA
Tel: 472 7578
S13 The Den Youth House
71 Dawberry Road
Kings Heath
Birmingham
B14 6RY
Tel: 444 6955
S14 Masefield & Chaddesley
Detached Youthwork Project
Masefield Hall
Masefield Square
Northfield
Birmingham
B31 2HL
Tel: 476 9063
S15 Learning Curve
Moseley Road
Balsall Heath
Birmingham
B12
Tel: 440 5444
S16 Milebrook Hall
Field Lane
Bartley Green
Birmingham
B32 3TJ
Tel: 475 0666
S17 Kings Heath Youth Club
c/o Bishop Challoner R.C. School
Institute Road
Kings Heath
Birmingham
B14 7EG
Tel: 444 4161
S18 Moseley School ARC Project
College Road
Moseley
Birmingham
B13 9LR
Tel: 678 1289
S19 Tyseley Community Centre
Formans Road
Tyseley
Birmingham
B11 3BY
Tel: 777 4022
S20 Sparkhill Youth Project
Sparkhill Centre
477 Stratford Road
Sparkhill
Birmingham
B11 4LE
Tel: 464 8321
S21 Astral Centre
Farmborough Road
Castle Vale
Birmingham
B35 7NL
Tel: 464 9221
S22 Nechells Green Community Centre
Melvina Road
Nechells
Birmingham
B7 4QU
Tel: 333 4173
S23 Green Door Project
Wryley Hall
Lakes Road
Wryley Birch
Erdington
Birmingham
B23 7UR
Tel: 356 8779
S24 Young Peoples Health Project
c/o The Pump



Youth Service Scrutiny Review

Young People's Consultation

Scrutiny Review of Youth Service - Feedback from young people



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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Outline for young people focus groups (Scrutiny Review)



Birmingham's Youth Service

Introduction

Youth workers from the Central Youth Service Team met with 132 young people in 9 different youth projects across the city to discuss their perspectives of the Youth Service. There was on average 12-14 young people at each group, representing the different projects, with more than one project represented at some centres.

The discussion was broken into 3 general sections

- The proposed hub and spoke model
- Their views on the Youth Service
- Involving young people in decision making

The Model

Generally the first question young people wanted to know was 'is their centre staying open?' The next point made quite forcibly by many of the groups was that they didn't want to lose their staff. Understandably their view on the model depended on their place on the model. Some centres would lose staff due to it being a medium centre; this had an affect on how they viewed the model.

The young people were generally more supportive of retaining an open access service as much as possible. Highlighting the preventative nature of youth service provision, many of the young people pointed out that they all needed support at different times, so could be occasionally classed as 'targeted'. Reiterating the point, some expressed an opinion that if they became sidelined in youth service delivery they would generally be at risk of becoming the targeted group in need of extra support. Members at Naseby Youth Centre pointed to the integrated young men's/inclusion nights, whilst members of the deaf youth club were in attendance at Small Heath youth centre.

Young people's perspective of the Youth Service

The young people have a very positive view of their youth centre, highlighting it as a safe and friendly place to go, where they learned new skills, got support, built their confidence and got to experience a range of different activities. The youth workers were repeatedly highlighted as important reasons for attending.

If there was no provision, the young people seem to feel they will generally find themselves in trouble – either because they will be bored, or just because they will by necessity have to spend a lot of time on the streets or in local parks. Others worry that they will be indoors a lot, either because they don't want to hang about on streets or because they spend their time on games consoles. A number of young men were particularly worried about the possibility of falling into crime, or trouble finding them, as it comes with the territory of being on the street a lot.

There was a real concern they would not have access to the same opportunities they receive through the Youth Service. The cost of finding alternatives to the activities they enjoy, e.g. studio time to do music, or just generally the range of experiences they enjoy through their youth projects would prove prohibitive without the low cost option provided by the Youth Service.

The general changes members might make would be to increase what they have now. This might include improved or extra resources or a change in opening hours. Young people at The Vibe, Small Heath and 641 Selly Oak would like to brighten up their environment.



Involving young people in decision making

All of the groups have mechanisms for involving their members in decision making processes within the project. Some are committees whilst for other it's the informal route of conversation, or even just members making suggestions through the year.

Outside of the centre it's a mixed bag, with some projects having members occasionally attend ward sub-committees or have councillors visit. Only a few felt they had much influence outside the centre/project. A mixed bag of suggestions were put forward for ensuring young people's voice, mostly around promoting opportunities, and the use of social media.

Notes from the different youth centres

Clifton Rd Youth Centre

The Model

What do people think?

- Model is good because Clifton Rd will be open pretty much just as much – which is good
- Cuts don't seem fair. Are there others ways of making the savings?
- It's better to keep centres open as much as possible. Is there a way of keeping partner centres and satellites open all the time?
- Can you cut from specific services/centres instead of them all?
- Make sure resources in youth centres are put in centres where they will be used most. For example recording studios in centres not used but music is a huge thing in Clifton Rd but we don't have a recording studio – if we did it would be used all of the time
- If type of delivery changes are to be more targeted support then it won't be as good
- Is it possible to have the satellites for targeted work only and hubs for open access?

Young people's perspective of the service?

Why come to Clifton? What do you get out of coming to Clifton?

- Music
- Don't get told off for being yourself
- Can discuss issues – consistent 1-1 support when needed
- We can do voluntary work – it can help with UCAS applications
- There is a big sense of community
- Confidence is built
- Musical opportunities, recording, practice
- Made lots of friends – big sense of community
- "If Clifton closed down, we would become the people targeted for support"
- People travel from many different places: Aston, Walsall, Great Barr, Erdington and Solihull or example
- Somewhere to keep out of the cold – warm, dry, safe place to be.

What makes a good youth centre?

- Friendly youth workers
- Friendly people



Birmingham's Youth Service

Would you make any changes to your youth centre?

- Change dance studio to a recording studio
- Make timings for general youth group more consistent
- Oven – proper kitchen
- "Clifton is perfect but a new drum-kit would be nice"
- More stuff on in half-term

How would you persuade a friend to attend Clifton?

- Tell them about the friendly youth workers and all the good things that happen

Engagement of young people

How are young people involved in decision making?

- In Clifton – Gig committee & events team
- Have got involved in protests and rallies
- Getting petitions signed for Save Birmingham Youth Service Birmingham. Set up stall for this accompanied by live music played by young people.
- Got involved in Walk of Hope
- Other committees in the centre

How to ensure young people are engaged in future?

- Youth councils
- Committees for different events and activities
- Use Facebook or twitter more to give information to young people ("if we're not here we're on Facebook")

Naseby Youth Centre

The new Model

- Opening new centres when they can't look after old ones
- Why open centres if there is no one to staff it or anything in it?
- Funding only the big places – not considering those below.
- Bringing in a youth worker from out of the area, we might not like – 'either we go, or the worker'
- The young people think it is really bad because there have been enough cuts already. Why is the service opening new centres and not supporting the older centres. What's going to happen if new centres don't work, are you going to close them down?
- Young people are worried about new faces.
- If the youth using the centre at the moment don't fit the needs of a new system, we won't be in as much. If less members attending, will sessions be cancelled?

What do you think about targeted work versus open access?



- Naseby accepts all, but prioritises clients with help, special needs.
- Youth services will look up to Council to ask for services
- Open access is clashing with targeted
- Open access will give everyone a chance
- Targeted, closing doors to youth – then ask ‘why are youth on road’
- Use centre for targeted work in the day time and keep it open at night
- However, targeted work could be helping special needs

Why come to Naseby Centre?

- Family atmosphere
- Off the streets
- Safe and friendly environment
- Social skills
- Integration with other people
- Boosts confidence
- Facilities
- Career advice
- Confidence
- Involves all people
- Treated equally
- Activities
- Like a Family
- Mates come here
- Keeps us off the streets
- Learn new skills
- Mix with different people
- Integration (disabled group)
- Rewarding trips
- Good advice on difference subjects
- Help with education
- It's fun
- Feel equal
- Learn new things
- Equal opportunities

If could make changes what would they be?

- More resources
- More funding
- More sport opportunities
- Longer periods of time



Birmingham's Youth Service

- Open seven days a week
- More money so get moving in

If Naseby Centre wasn't here how would affect the area or you?

- Gun crime
- On the streets
- Take or sell drugs
- Gangs
- Start crimes
- Be on the street
- Homeless because Centre is like home
- It'll have nowhere to go
- Naseby is the only centre that works with special needs children in the area

What would happen if there was improved services here?

- Keep people healthy
- Numbers will pick up if more people be coming
- Less gang crime
- Naseby centre to become a main Hub
- More courses
- Worker for special needs
- More workshops

Anyway to improve Naseby?

- To make Naseby top of the chart – we have to offer more and better facilities.
- More computers / courses
- Cater more for special needs
- At the moment we are grafting
- We need more workshops

How would you get people to come?

- Tell your friends
- It's safe and warm
- Facilities
- Staff
- Advice
- Tell people it's a trustworthy place to come



- Tell people what we could offer

How do we make our views heard?

- Newsletters
- Websites
- Socially
- Inviting Councillors to our Centre
- Youth Parliament / Council
- Facebook
- Talking point
- Offering opportunities
- Youth Parliament
- Awareness using fun days and fundraising

Charity work raises awareness

Tesco fundraiser for special needs

641 Youth House, Selly Oak

The new Model

- Is ok because 641 is staying open
- Don't know if how centres were chosen for closure was fair

Targeted vs open access

- Would prefer more open access rather than targeted work
- Could there be one big centre for targeted work?
- Some people disagreed with working just with targeted groups because everyone has issues
- If different people came to the centre because they were sent – the centre would lose its identity

Young people view of service

Why come to 641

- Elaine!!
- Music
- Everyone knows 641 – good spot
- Open everyday
- If no one in you are allowed wait for them because you know people will arrive eventually
- Come to see Elaine
- Go-karting
- Residential



Birmingham's Youth Service

Benefits of attending

- CV help
- Healthy – a woman comes in and checks our health
- Doing the music – very important
- Good laugh – FUN – good atmosphere
- It's warm! Especially in winter
- *"If on the street, even if not causing trouble, trouble comes to us"*
- Support – for example Elaine helped me with my placement
- Elaine supported me on projects – helped my apply for funding to do music and video project
- *"It's like...the little things mean more than the big things"*

Any changes?

- More regular things like football
- Paint the room/building
- New stereo
- Friday opening times
- Have late opening on certain days

If no youth provision – how would area be affected?

- Riot!!
- There would be problems for other people dealing with bored young people
- Wouldn't be able to do what I love
- If no music – things would be really bad
- Be bored – sad
- It would be bad for all of South Birmingham – Young people come from all over – Selly Oak, Kings Heath, Moseley, Kings Norton, Handsworth on the north.
- 641 is so well known it would have a huge affect on a lot of people and areas.
- We would never do anything for the council or to help them – we would hate the council
- We would have no respect for the Youth Service

What would you do if 641 closed?

- Anything or nothing – we'd all be on the streets doing nothing
- Getting in trouble
- I don't play sports or work and without money to pay for stuff there is nothing to do
- Couldn't make music
- No money – can't do anything

How would things be if we improved the service?

- More people would come
- Less crime in South Birmingham
- More activities
- More staff – could open more hours

How would you persuade friends to come to 641?

- Tell them what we do
- Ask them what they like to do



Young people engagement

Can you make your voice heard in your project?

- Involved in planning and fundraising
- Go to ward committee
- Were involved in protests – Save Birmingham Youth Service

- At ward committees didn't feel listened to – Rather talk to youth workers

- Yes to social media as a way of sharing info and having a voice
- Should have big events like Expose and Y-Factor

610 Youth Projects – Kingstanding

The new Model

- Don't like it
- 610 is being downgraded
- 610 is not just a youth club – it has a bit of everything
- There is not enough staff
- How can it be open often enough, or the same as it is now?
- There is nothing in Erdington

Targeted vs Open access

- We have people with disabilities, so some of the work is already with people that might be targeted
- Can groups not come at the same time?
- We have problems too. All young people do
- All youth workers are really helpful
- Issues dealt with at moment include Bullying, teen pregnancy (what options are available)
- We trust the workers

Why do you come to 610?

- I'm bored at home
- Social – meet people
- Get help
- Get away from people I've had problems with
- Here has built my confidence
- Free to socialise with people
- This is like being at home.
- I love to come talk to the youth workers
- We belong - belonging
- Entertainment
- Without here I'd be at home
- When at home I get depressed – Here makes me better
- Only place to do voluntary work



Birmingham's Youth Service

- Hang out with friends
- Meet new people
- "To terrorise the staff (in a good way)"
- Music

How do you benefit from coming to 610?

- Confidence
- We help out and in return 610 treats us
- Nothing else to do if not here
- Music skills
- Learned self-defence
- Singing (we have a studio to use)
- It's like a second home

If you change anything – what would that be?

- More time in the studio
- Open more – longer hours

If centre was closed how would affect you and the local area?

- We'd be really upset
- Nowhere to go – I come all the way from Erdington
- There would be more vandalism
- We'd probably be hanging round on the streets
- Getting into trouble

If the centre was improved what would it be like?

- More people would come
- Less problems in the area

What improvements to the centre, if any, would you make?

- 'A lick of paint'
- More seats
- An hour long session where we could talk about problems with each other

To persuade others to attend

- Tell them what's here and what projects are happening soon

How do we ensure young people are engaged in the development of the service?

Are you involved in decision making in your centre?

- We can go into the office and talk about events
- We help plan events and projects

Are you able to have your voice heard outside of the centre?

- Haven't had any councillors come to 610
- Could send out leaflets and posters
- Use Facebook



Small Heath Youth Centre

The Model

What do you think about it?

- We will lose one youth worker who we have built up a relationship with.
- Feel bad about change because of loss of one youth worker because of whom I am in college.
- What do you do if you don't like the new youth worker if the current one moves or doesn't get the job?
- If my current youth worker was not here I would be on the street.

Should it be more open access or more targeted at vulnerable young people?

- With one full time youth worker and more targeted work there will be less open access and fewer activities for us.
- If the service says we can only open on specific days and times, what do we do on other days? Our nearest hub is Concord which is quite far and we don't want to go there.
- There could be less activities and trips.
- We want more sessions for deaf young people.
- More centres should have sessions for deaf young people.
- You can disadvantage the advantaged young people by focusing more on targeted groups.
- There is enough services/support out there for young people with specific needs i.e. those on drugs, alcohol etc.

The Youth Service from a young person's perspective

Why do you come to your youth centre/project?

- To have fun, meet new people and socialise.
- I could be involved in criminal activity. Coming here helps me to stay on the correct path.
- I can chill here, get involved in activities, entertain myself, play, help and support others.
- It gives me a chance to get away from home.
- A chance to take part in activities I wouldn't otherwise do.

How do you benefit from being part of the project?

- Improve my fitness.
- I get help with school work.
- Coming here opens doors for education and training.
- Opportunity to learn skills.
- Get certificates for achievement.
- We get to go on free trips.

If you could change anything – what would it be?

- Improve IT.
- Get new equipment, furniture, have more new activities, cleaner toilets, bigger space, longer opening hours and re-decorate.



Birmingham's Youth Service

What would happen in this area if there was no youth service provision?

- There will be more anti social behaviour.
- More young people involved in crime.
- More young people on the road.
- We will not have the opportunity to learn new skills.
- We will be bored.
- Additional support and guidance would not be available.
- We would have nowhere to go for help.

What would happen in this area if there was improved youth service provision?

- More young people would attend.
- More opportunities for young people.
- More youth workers would be recruited.

How would you persuade a friend to come to your centre?

- Bring them and introduce them.
- Promote the service.
- Make them aware more.

How do we ensure young people are engaged in the development of the youth service?

How are you involved in decision making in your project/centre?

- Our voice is heard in the centre. Our opinion is asked.
- Questionnaire and evaluation forms are used to get feedback from us.
- We get to choose activities.

Can you make your voice heard beyond the project/centre?

- Yes, we took part in Choose Youth, petition and Walk of Hope.
- We met councillors during the threat of cuts.

Any thoughts on how we could ensure young people are more involved in decision making?

- Youth Service should inform young people about decision being made through leaflets, adverts etc.

Does social media have a role?

- Yes, it's an advantage.
- We need to get twitter.

Concord Youth Centre

The New Model

- The model is good because Concord is good.
- If Adill goes no point coming.



- We don't want new workers.
- I don't feel good about caseload (IFST) that workers have to take on as they may cut our access to Concord.
- They already work with us (we are targeted).
- Everyone here is vulnerable anyway.
- What are we going to do if you work more with targeted groups?
- What do I do after college?
- I'll krank outside Concord and terrorise kids.
- I'll hang out on streets.

The Youth Service from a young person's perspective

Why do you come to your youth centre/project?

- To be a better person in life.
- Nothing else better to do.
- Fun
- See new faces.
- Football.
- Meet friends and staff.

How do you benefit from being part of the project?

- Come for personal support.
- Learn different things.
- Get advice and guidance.
- Socialise.
- Gym.
- Music studio.

If you change anything – what would that be?

- More time in the centre
- Stop trying to change it.
- More mixed sessions.
- Open more – Saturday.
- Night sessions – Sunday.
- Would like I-pads and PS3.

What would happen if there was no youth provision in your area?

- Some young people would be in jail.
- Would mess about.
- Nowhere to go.
- Mess about on road.
- Involved in more crime
- Hang around town.
- Stay in my house.
- I don't know what I would do with myself.
- I would be out in the road and get into trouble

How would you improve your centre/youth Service Birmingham?

- You can't improve it.



Birmingham's Youth Service

How would you persuade a friend to come to your centre?

- Drag them here.
- Tell them about what they've got.

How do we ensure young people are engaged in the development of the service?

How are you involved in decision making in your project/centre?

- We are consulted in the planning of projects and activities at Concord.
- We can speak to the staff. They listen.

Can you make your voice heard beyond the project/centre?

- Yes, we were involved in the Walk of Hope.
- We went to the Choose Youth rally.

Does social media have a role?

- Yes, Facebook is helpful.

The Vibe/Sheldon

The new Model

- Not fair – people losing jobs
- Normally we can go in anytime - if changed we won't anymore.

Why do you come to the youth centre?

- To meet up with my friends in a safe place and I enjoy coming to the centre
- To stay out of trouble from the streets
- Somewhere to go to – I don't enjoy hanging around the streets
- To learn new skills
- I come mainly to learn and play music
- The atmosphere and meeting new people
- To meet friends and do projects
- Because the facilities are great and the staff are friendly
- Fun
- Better than being on the streets/keeps us off the streets
- Safe place
- Be away from home
- Better than being in front of a console
- Great place to make new friends
- Do sexual health workshops
- Confidence building
- Music is a big thing for us
- Drama
- IT work
- T-shirt printing
- Helps us in life



- Dancing
- Kick boxing
- There are OAP groups and Kiddies that come here too
- Duke of Edinburgh group
- CV help and job search help
- Advice from youth workers

What benefits do you get from coming to the youth centre?

- New skills
- It's a calm and lively environment
- I socialise well here
- I was involved in a young people's health project
- I can speak to youth workers about my problems
- The youth workers keep me out of trouble
- It helps keep me off the streets and out of trouble
- Doing new things
- Responsibility
- Learn how to speak to people properly
- Experience in the studio
- Help with CVs
- Training courses like First Aid
- Help with CBT and theory test
- So we've gained qualifications
- Got to go on trips – reasonably priced because we couldn't afford to normally to go
- Gets us out of the house
- Make new friends

If you could make any changes?

- Location – The river smells
- More appropriate to the age group
- No changes – the centre is great
- Vending machines
- Change having to pay
- The days it's open
- More courses

If there was no centre, how would it affect the area?

- There would be more trouble in the area
- There would be a lot of young people on the streets
- Police would be around the place all the time
- More gangs and trouble for the police
- No one would mingle and probably stay at home
- "If you took the place away you would only end up spending money doing other things for us when we get in trouble"



Birmingham's Youth Service

- There would be more problems for the community and complaints would be put forward against the youth
- More crime
- Lots of fights
- Young people would be bored
- Would effect everyone not just young people
- There would be nowhere for young people to go
- Much more tagging

How would it affect you if there was no youth centre?

- I wouldn't come out
- I'd be just hanging around on the streets
- I'd probably get into trouble
- I'd be sitting at home on social networks sites or on the x-box
- Hanging out in 'asbo groups'
- Probably tagging
- Could get arrested
- Be in the park where it's not safe
- Home on the x-box
- In the park or stuck at home

How would you improve the centre?

- More funding
- More resources
- More homely and warm
- More colourful inside and out
- Brighten up with paint – and I've had the idea of having all young people's hand prints and names on a big wall
- Change to longer opening hours – finish later – open earlier
- More projects
- Clean the area around
- More stuff to attract teenagers
- More activities to do

How would improved provision affect the area?

- More young people would come
- More youth club days
- Community would get involved more
- If the youth club was improved the Youth Service might brighten the outside up and they may have more people attracted to the project

How would you persuade friends to come?

- Tell them what things are going on
- Tell them how friendly everyone is
- I'd tell them it keeps your mind off causing trouble and then you wouldn't be grounded



- I'd tell them about all the things it offers and the atmosphere and that the youth workers are fantastic and easier to get along with (down to earth)
- Advertisement
- Inform schools

Decision making

Do you have a voice in your centre?

- Yes – there is discussion groups
- We can let staff know our ideas and they act on them when they can
- Staff take what I say into consideration
- Everyone speaks their minds
- We help decide activities

Can you make your voice heard outside of the centre – in your area?

Councillors have visited but we don't feel anything happened as a result

Any ideas how we can ensure young people are more involved in decision making

- Do a petition
- Ask parents to vote
- Protest
- Talk to MPs or Councillors
- Contact government/letters
- Debates

Is there a role for social media?

There were 2 sessions - first week said yes, second week said no ☺

3 Estates Youth project

Model

- The model isn't good – One full-time worker in this centre isn't enough
- "Is that why we never had as many trips over the summer"?
- "There'll be a lot more people going without jobs, no one to talk to/no where to go"

Targeted vs Open Access?

- Should stay as open access because workers already support those that need help
- "Open access, it's all about equality..."

Why do you come to 3 Estates Youth project?

- Been coming here since I was 12-13
- It has helped me a lot – I've progressed – I did a college course and am now looking for jobs.
- The Music – would have to pay to do it somewhere else
- For the girls group – There are things we can say and do without the boys
- CV support – Helps with job and college applications
- Can go on the computers



Birmingham's Youth Service

- Good company
- Confidential when talking with workers
- Can just pop in if I need help or to talk

What are the benefits from attending?

- Help getting Qualifications – Getting on an apprenticeship for example.
- Help – from general advice to help with CVs
- I'm more sociable since coming here
- I'm happier coming here
- I've learned new skills – for example, can put on nails
- The workers really supported me and helped me find counselling

What changes would you make?

- Games – Have console available more
- Music studio open more often

If there was no centre – how would it affect the area? How would affect you personally?

- Young people would be on the streets bored
- There would be more crime
- Some of us probably wouldn't be allowed out
- Might be on drugs
- No one to talk to
- We'd end up doing the same thing everyday
- My mom doesn't have the money to do all of the things I do here
- Meeting other people – it can be scary on the streets and I would avoid different people – when in here we meet different types of people we wouldn't normally talk to
- We fundraise for the project – for example gardening and litter picking.
- We do 'Trade and Gain' – for each bit of work we do for the centre e.g. fundraising, we get a 'treat' like going on a trip

How would you persuade others to come to 3 estates?

- Tell them what goes on here

Are you involved in decision making in the centre?

- Yes – we get asked what things we'd like to do, and help plan them

Outside of the project?

- Not really – we don't get visited by councillors
- We're never asked our opinions

How can we ensure young people's voices get heard in future?

- Come to the youth centres and speak with young people
- "Young people should have meetings every six weeks to speak to councillors"

Does Social media have a role?

- Use social media but, "really depends if I saw it".



- "I wouldn't comment on Facebook"
- Use it to let us know about events

OutCentral

The New Model

Budget

- Could have been worse. Like other youth services we could have lost the youth service altogether.
- Terrible being cut by half.
- "I think it's really crap, I'm so down, need centre".
- Why can't it be shared more fairly?
- Can we encourage more volunteers?

Should it be more open access or more targeted at vulnerable young people?

- More open access. Feeling annoyed that if you haven't got an issue you can't go.
- It should be there for both, but concentrate on more vulnerable.
- Can't only focus on vulnerable.
- All young people have needs and feel bitter about this.
- Coming to the Youth Service is a choice. Youth workers can't force young people to talk. It should be a choice.
- We are not being told to come, it should be a choice.

The Youth service from a young person's perspective

Why do you come to your youth centre/project?

- To avoid being stereotyped.
- Went on a free trip to India.
- To meet gays.
- To avoid feeling isolated.
- Can't meet other gay people of similar age, can't go to clubs.
- To avoid meeting people on the internet.
- Important for my confidence.
- Support very important.
- You could feel like the only gay kid in Birmingham.
- Get away from stereotype people think I should be.
- Meet decent gay people.
- Safe place.

How do you benefit from being part of the project?

- Learnt how to drive a narrow boat.
- Get recognition and qualifications.
- Confidence building.
- Relevant activities, meet other organisations for support.
- Fun, get away from school.
- "Keeping off the streets, haven't stabbed anyone".
- More free stuff.



Birmingham's Youth Service

If you could change anything – what would it be?

- Advertise it more.
- Make it easier to be found.
- More deaf awareness.
- Concentrate on schools.
- Advertise, point out laws
- Raise more awareness of LGBT issues, so young people know support is there.
- Why not get money for Pride?
- Celebrate more gay's days.

What would happen in your area if there was no youth service provision?

- "I'll be very annoyed".
- "I wouldn't be out of the closet".
- "I'll be lost".
- "I wouldn't have the support
- Cut off from gay community.
- Nothing for under 18's
- "I wouldn't be talking to my parents at all if it wasn't for this group.
- "I wouldn't get over the stereotype".
- Would be in men's bars, get into scene. Dangerous on scene. Can get manipulated.
- Would be vulnerable without anywhere to go.
- Wouldn't have safe place to meet.
- Wouldn't be able to share issues, stories and support each other.
- Be sad.
- We would meet up outside.

What would happen in this area if there was improved youth service provision?

- Celebrities speeches
- Make other people aware
- Gay people can lead the group more.
- Continued space for our group, not fight for resources.
- Interact with other gay groups in the city.
- Go to other Pride, to London Pride.
- Like it how it is.

How would you persuade a friend to come to your centre?

- I persuaded young people to come as they had similar problems that I had and they got the support,
- It's a break in working week.

How do we ensure young people are engaged in the development of the service?

How are you involved in the decision making in your project?

- We are involved in the planning.

Can you make your voice heard beyond the project?

- We have a float at Pride.



- In Youth Parliament.

Any thoughts on how we could ensure young people are more involved in decision making?

- Need to know when decisions need to be made.
- Advertise in colleges etc.
- Get councillors to visit groups
- Website

Does social media have a role?

- Yes, website, twitter.

**Outline for Young People Focus Groups
(Youth Service Scrutiny Review 2011)**

Oct/Nov – a minimum of 8 sessions of consultation with young people in Youth Centres/projects. To include the preparation of young people for a feedback session with the scrutiny committee, informing them about the background to the review, the proposed model for the Youth Service and exploring the various areas the scrutiny committee are reviewing.

1 – Background info – Review, budget, model

Explanation of Scrutiny review

Key Questions –

- What is ***the role and purpose of the City Council's Youth Service*** in Birmingham and how will it be delivered in future, given the reduction in resources available?
- How does the service link up with and complement the youth activities provided by other organisations?
- ***How will young people be engaged and involved in the development and evolution of the service going forward?***

Budget – One page/slide

- This is what it was, this is what it is
- This is what it will be from April 2012.

The New model

- What does it look like?
- Where is your centre?
- How will it work?
- The work with the IFST's?
- Targeted more at vulnerable young people and less open access?
- What do you think about it?
- Does it look fair given budget constraints?
- Should it be more open access or more targeted at vulnerable young people?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages?

2 – The Youth Service from a young person's perspective



Birmingham's Youth Service

- Why do you come to your youth centre/project?
- How do you benefit from being part of the project?
- What do you get out of coming here?
- If you could change anything – what would it be?
- What would happen in this area if there was no youth service provision?
- What do you think you and your friends be doing if the centre closed?
- What would happen in this area if there was improved youth service provision?
- How would you improve your centre/youth service?
- How would you persuade a friend to come to your centre?

3 – How do we ensure young people are engaged in the development of the youth service?

- How are you involved in decision making in your project/centre?
- Can you make your voiced heard beyond the project/centre?
- Any thoughts on how we could ensure young people are more involved in decision making?
- Does social media have a role?