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Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: 18 January 2012

Dear Member

**CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
FRIDAY, 20 JANUARY 2012**

Please find enclosed the Kent Youth County Council and District/Borough Council responses to the Youth Service Consultation to assist you with the consideration of item B5 at Friday, 20 January 2012 meeting of the Customer and Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee..

Agenda No	Item
B5	<u>Youth Services Transformation</u> (Pages 1 - 34)

Yours sincerely

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services

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Moreman, Andy - CC SI

From: KYCC
Sent: 21 September 2011 16:26
To: KYS Consultation - EX CMY
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: KYCC Response to KYS Consultation

Kent Youth County Council would like to submit the following statement to the Kent Youth Service Consultation:

"As a representative body of the young people of Kent, Kent Youth County Council is appalled that in this time of great need Kent County Council is turning it's back on young people. KYCC believes Youth Work is no place for market forces and young people deserve youth provision of the highest quality.

Kent Youth County Council believe this new model will result in a lack of positive activities for young people, further reductions to an already underfunded service and a variation of quality across the county. KYCC believes the focus should remain on centre based provision as opposed to this new revised focus on school based Community Youth Tutors.

Kent Youth County Council would like to question the suitability of some Providers who may come forward. Youth Work should be provided by apolitical, secular, non profit making organisations. We believe the current Youth Service is best placed to deliver this work.

Kent Youth County Council calls upon Kent County Council to review its budget commitment to Kent Youth Service."

Kent Youth County Council 18th September 2011

KYCC would like to submit an organisation response to the questionnaire, with the following responses:

Having read about the new plans for Youth Service in Kent, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes to the delivery of Youth Services in Kent?

Each District/ Borough will have one 'Hub', one street-based/ Street-Based project and one or more school-based youth worker.

Agree

Further funding will be available for local groups to deliver their own youth work through the process of commissioning

Strongly agree

Q13 We are proposing to buy in youth work activities in the areas KCC no longer provides them directly. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

Kent Youth Service is committed to supporting the personal and social development of young people by providing youth work activities which allows 'informal' education to take place.

Agree

The amount of £1.2m for buying in youth work activities is intended to be a basic amount. This is only the starting point as we would like to work more closely with partners to identify other resources or funds which could increase the opportunities for local service delivery.

Disagree

How we buy in services will be decided by what outcomes they offer for young people. We would like new providers of activities to suggest fun and challenging ways to meet the outcomes young people want and this will help us decide who the best providers are. We want this process to provide local groups with the opportunity to get the money to provide youth services in the future.

Agree



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Your ref
Our ref LS RJS/SMA
Date 7 October 2011

Dear Sir

KENT YOUTH SERVICE REVIEW CONSULTATION

I am writing on behalf of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council with regard to Kent County Council's Consultation Paper "Kent Youth Service Transformation Plan", which proposes new methods of delivering Youth Services across the County within the Borough of Tonbridge & Malling.

The Council is strongly opposed to the proposals brought forward within the consultation document, which it feels will be damaging to the provision of services to young people within the Borough. The Council would request that the proposals are revisited by the County Council in liaison with Officers from the Borough Council.

With regard to the above general statement, the Council would wish to make a number of specific comments as follows:

- The loss of the Youth Centre at Samays would remove a much valued facility to young people, not only from within Snodland, but also within the surrounding area. Snodland is located in one of the main areas of deprivation within the Borough of Tonbridge & Malling and it is felt that the area does not have the relevant support networks in place to provide commissioning work from this facility. Whilst it has been suggested that the existing facilities at Samays are not adequate to provide all the services required by the new hub this could be corrected by careful and targeted investment in any areas of service provision identified as requiring improvement. In this respect, the Borough Council is aware of a £70,000 developer contribution held by the County Council from the nearby Holborough development, which could be used to upgrade the facilities at this location.
- The Council feels strongly that the proposals being brought forward have not been based on a local needs analysis to identify the range and depth of youth services needed in each locality. Rather, the proposals seem to be based on national statistics which cannot adequately reflect local circumstances and characteristics.

Leisure Services is a Division of Planning, Transport & Leisure Services
Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure Services: Steve Humphrey MRTPI
Chief Leisure Officer: Robert Styles BA (Hons) DMS M IMSPA



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

In overview, the Council feels that the proposals have been based on inaccurate data, inadequate consultation and a model is being imposed on the Borough which does not reflect either the unique nature of Tonbridge & Malling, or indeed the current provision of services by local organisations. It is felt that assumptions have been made with a lack of real evidence and the Council would strongly encourage Kent County Council to rethink its proposals and bring forward a new approach based on close liaison with Officers from the Borough Council.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Styles', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer

Swale Borough Council Response - Kent Youth Service Transformation Proposal 'A Vision for the Future'

Swale Borough Council endorses the direction of travel proposed within the transformation report and the commissioning mechanism suggested. The council understands the needs for the proposals for reduced direct service delivery by Kent Youth Service – one youth 'hub' accompanied by street and school based projects, supported by an increase in commissioned services. This should provide a flexible service suited to local, changing needs. However the newly commissioned services will need to compensate for the loss of directly delivered youth provision in Faversham and Sheerness where it would impact on the 5409 young people who were members of Sheerness Youth Centre during 2010/11 and 3170 in Faversham, along with addressing the current needs of the wider area.

The methodology for allocation of resources indicates that the levels of deprivation, school attainment and other factors will be considered as part of the needs assessment process which will inform the commissioning process, with resources allocated to areas of greatest need and consideration to be given to those aged under 13. Swale is one of the most deprived boroughs in Kent and each of its areas – Sittingbourne, Isle of Sheppey, Faversham and the rural areas have their own specific needs which need to be taken into account.

In calculating the financial allocation it must be ensured that the demographic model includes and reflects not just the core population but the significant increase in population, including children and young people, through the major school holidays from tourism, in particular to the Island. This influx creates a further need for youth service provision and diversion activities that should be recognised in the funding formulae. Transport issues across the borough must also be considered as public transport is limited, particularly on the Isle of Sheppey. Details of these issues and others are known to local organisations, including Swale Borough Council, who should lead the needs assessment development. Consideration must be given to the impact on existing provision in place around each Borough, not just that currently funded by Kent Youth Service. Swale Borough Council is currently undertaking an audit of the youth service provision which it provides, the results to date are shown in Appendix I.

The council fully supports the recommendation that funding is allocated based on a needs assessment process and eagerly awaits confirmation of the final budget for the Swale area. The importance of a flexible service must also be stressed, one that can be targeted and with the ability to react to changing needs.

The proposals highlight that the total savings to be made as part of this service transformation across Kent are £900,000. Clarification is needed as to what the current budget for youth services during 2011/12 within Swale by Kent Youth Service is, including those grants awarded, and if it is anticipated that, despite the resource allocation model, there will be an overall reduction in resources available for Swale compared with 2011/12.

It is important that local agencies and Partnerships lead the development of the local needs assessment and delivery model as it is these groups that hold the local knowledge and data. The commissioning process should be led by the Locality Boards and further clarification is requested as to how this will occur, along with how it will link with any commissioning by the Local Children Trust Boards. The Locality Boards should be the accountability mechanism for monitoring/reporting contract performance. This will ensure that the process remains as simple, transparent and equitable as possible and that local knowledge shapes the final commissioned services so that they best meet the needs of the local community. Swale Borough Council previously expressed interest in the devolution of youth services from Kent County Council to itself for the local area, and would again like to have this considered as part of this consultation process.

The Council supports the move to a commissioning model, but would like to see it designed in such a way that it also supports localism, in other words that local groups are afforded a level playing field to bid to run the services. This might include in the way the tendering mechanism is run, but also stipulations around how local groups will be involved as part of any sub-letting arrangements. The tendering process should also consider the opportunities for apprenticeships, the impact of on other local agendas including health, and other 'social value' issues.

It is anticipated within the proposal that the funding made available for commissioned services by Kent Youth Service will be bolstered by other funding streams by partners at county and local levels. However it has not been made clear which funding streams this could include or whether any organisations have already agreed to this, or how they may be approached. It is requested that clarification is provided with regard to this and how such a joint commissioning mechanism would operate at a local level.

The local community, including young people, need to be able to input into the needs assessment and delivery model creation. It needs to be clearer how this will be undertaken. Additionally has consultation already occurred with local voluntary and community sector groups as to whether they have the capacity or skills to deliver these local youth services? Although training and support to these groups has been mentioned in the proposal document, further information is needed as to what this support would entail and how it would ensure that quality services will be delivered.

The process for transition of services needs to be communicated to Swale Borough Council and other partners, along with the mitigation measures for any identified risks. Local areas, including Swale Borough Council, will also be able to aid in the identification of local risks to ensure that the impact on the local community is minimal. For example, the proposals would see a cease in delivery by voluntary and community groups currently commissioned through the Partnership Award Grant Scheme, which could see a gap in services unless the new commissioned services commence immediately following the closing of those existing. Additionally this proposal could see a loss of the workforce and skills from the Swale area as up to 64.5 full time equivalent posts could be removed across the whole service. Has the impact of this on Swale been discussed and are proposals being put forward as to how this could be limited?

Appendix I: Swale Borough Council Youth Provision – 2011/2012

Department	Project Or Service	Funding Source
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responds to requests for information from schools and conducts school visits and talks subject to time and other priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No dedicated funding to this element of service delivery. ▪ Information and guidance provided by Government or Environmental Organisation which is then cascaded by Climate Change Officer to young people through schools.
Economy and Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swale Youth Forum Meetings x3 per year ▪ Local Democracy Week Events – 2 political speed dating events and two schools used Mayor to act as Returning Officer for Student Council elections. ▪ Supporting Swale Youth Advisory Group projects – developed 'Splash the Cash with KCC Youth Services. ▪ Promotion of activities for young people on the Swale Borough Council website. (Option to consider regular feature on activities in Inside Swale which would require additional promotional budget) ▪ Learning & Skills agenda – NEETS activity and 100 in 100 Apprenticeship scheme. Spend to date has largely been on promotional efforts in relation to 100 in 100. and employer engagement ▪ 'Support for Apprenticeships' grant scheme, aimed at encouraging small employers to take on NEETs of 13 weeks + ▪ Internal central apprenticeship scheme to be established within 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SBC budget total of £1250 to promote and support the Youth Forum meetings and activities. ▪ £5,000 from KCC Councillors and £1,000 personal contribution from Cllr George Bobbin. Any SBC costs to come from Youth Forum budget. ▪ No ECS dedicated budget for promoting Youth Activities. ▪ New SBC website content signposting activities for young people went live October 14th. ▪ SBC learning & Skills budget stands at a total of £157,000 (this includes items listed below). Spend is currently

	<p>Learning and Skills budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Membership of NEET strategy Group; Swale 14-19 Planning Forum; Seashells Steering Group; Children's Centre Advisory Board. 	<p>well below this, but partnership activity is building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ £38,000 SBC budget and £12,000 KCC budget
Mayors Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School Visits to Council Chamber – restricted to one per term. Minterne Primary during summer + Meadowfield planned for Nov 10th. St Peters Primary School has also requested a visit to be scheduled. ▪ Mayor also regularly invited to schools to attend events and make presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mayor's budget pays for hospitality for students and pupils. ▪ ECS Officer time to support the meetings and provide a theme or exercise, visits provide an opportunity to Promote the Youth Forum, Swale Youth Advisory Group
Sports Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sportivate – sports coaching in six sports to young people aged 14 – 25. 800 young people. ▪ Disability Sport – variety of clubs held at Swallows Leisure Centre, Faversham Gym and Sheppey Healthy Living Centre ▪ Disability Sailing – 125 young people. ▪ Disability Horse Riding – 24 young people. ▪ Play Rangers – 1500 young people and families playing in parks in school holidays. ▪ Swale Youth Cricket Development League – 450 young people playing competitive cricket each week in summer. ▪ Chance 2 Shine – cricket coaching in schools to 30 local schools. ▪ School Sport Competitions – lead in cross country, kwik cricket, rounders, hockey and athletics, support basketball, sports stacking, high 5 netball and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ £7,500 ▪ £6,000 ▪ £2,000 ▪ £14,000 ▪ Backed by Queenborough Fisheries Trust ▪ £25,000

	rugby.	
Commissioning & Open Spaces Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Play area provision & maintenance ▪ General open space provision ▪ Football & rugby pitches and tennis courts ▪ Play Rangers ▪ Gunpowder Works Education Programme (with Groundwork) ▪ Open Spaces Open Minds Programme (with Connexions & Groundwork) ▪ Indoor sports through Leisure Centres ▪ Swimming concessions ▪ Attendance at Faversham Youth Working Party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mostly SBC base budget ▪ Play Rangers – Big Lottery ▪ Play area improvements through development contributions or external funding
Swale Youth Development Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In meeting the challenge of London 2012 for our communities and to secure a lasting legacy for culture, the Council said we would: ▪ engage and inspire our children and young people ▪ build confidence ▪ support training needs ▪ raise performance standards ▪ promote excellence ▪ close the competitive gap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2009/10 SYDF and SBC jointly launched the 2012 Youth Award Scheme and currently provides match funding to young people in the sum of £3000 per annum.
Swale Community Safety Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery of ASB Case management which may include a young person as a victim, witness or perpetrator. Appropriate enforcement/support action will be taken. ▪ Community Budgets project, working with families with complex needs which includes children and young people ▪ Projects within the safer and stronger plan to meet the young people priority. During 2011/12 this has included youth outreach work as part of task and finish groups; provision of play equipment through residents champion project; young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding for the young people projects within the safer and stronger plan comes from external funding – the community safety grant from the home office; the residents champion fund from the home office; my place matters funding from Kent Fire and Rescue Service. ▪ ASB Case Management and

	involvement in delivery of my place matters project in Sheerness; youth projects as part of neighbourhood agreement project.	Community Budgets is delivered by a post which is part external funding, part SBC core budget.
Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We provide administrative support to three Swale Youth Forum meetings ▪ We help to support 'Local Democracy Week' Swale Youth Forum activity with a staff resource at events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Within existing budget and work programme.
Leysdown Rose-tinted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voices of Leysdown: ▪ Intergenerational project using the media of film, photography and sound, to engage a large number of community members to explore their perceptions and recollections of Leysdown. ▪ Engaged 29 young volunteers (11-19 year olds) who lived in the Warden and Leysdown area to interview and record recollections from adult population in Leysdown ▪ Engaged 15 (10 year olds) from Eastchurch primary School. ▪ Engaged new arts audiences ▪ Community development ▪ Raised new skill levels and understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KCC arts Development unit £10,000 ▪ Community Cohesion Funding £4225 ▪ Swale CVS (inkind support) £3750 ▪ Leysdown Rose-tinted Officer and Swale CVS officer support inkind £2195
Human Resources Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The HR department co-ordinate Work Experience applications. In the year 2009-2010 we had 23 placements, and 2010-2011 we had 12 placements. ▪ Students apply for placements by submitting the application form or completing the Online form, and we try and find a placement for every application we receive, although we are not always successful. 	
Housing Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide advice for those 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SBC base budget

Team	<p>threatened with homelessness and seek to resolve housing problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mediate with parents/relatives and friends to resolve conflict which could lead to homelessness ▪ Work with Porchlight to provide an education package across Kent to highlight youth homelessness ▪ Provide emergency accommodation for homeless 16/17 year olds and work with Social Services under the Kent protocol. This protocol aims to provide clarity regarding statutory responsibility for young homeless people aged between 16 and 21 years including care leavers, unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Disabled young people. ▪ Partnership work with Bridge House (an accommodation based supported housing project) to maximise accommodation for young people in Swale and assist with suitable move on accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homelessness Government grant ▪ One off external Government funding ▪ SBC base budget ▪ Officer time within existing budget
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Our Ref: SDC/rcabt20111018
Direct Dial: 01303 853241
E-Mail: lee.jones@shepway.gov.uk
Date: 28 October 2011

Shepway District Council
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
Kent CT20 2QY

Date: 28 October 2011

Kent County Council
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ

Dear Sirs,

**KENT YOUTH SERVICES – SERVICE TRANSFORMATION PROPOSAL –
OFFICIAL RESPONSE FROM SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Shepway District Council asked whether it could be consulted on the proposed changes to Kent's Youth Services and on 5 October 2011 the committee resolved to formally respond to Kent County Council as part of the consultation process.

As the Cabinet Member for Sport and Culture and Community Safety I have been passed the minutes of the meeting in order to formulate this response to the proposed changes to Kent Youth Services which should form part of the consultation process on behalf of this council.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following comments:

- Although impacting negatively on the service provision, members noted the need for Kent County Council (KCC) to reduce its operating costs in order to meet its budgetary pressures
- It further recognised that the Kent Youth Service was being requested to make savings in line with other departments within KCC
- The proposed location of the youth hub, Café IT, was not felt appropriate in that it failed to provide external space for youngsters and that it was near a busy road

- It was agreed that the location of any youth hub would be best situated were the need for such a provision is at its greatest, therefore the area within East Folkestone was generally felt as providing a better location
- The new provision of a fund to enable voluntary and other groups to access grant monies to fund youth activities was received positively. Members would

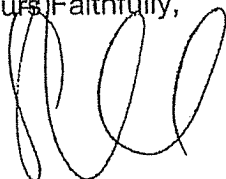
Be interested to understand, when the process had been defined, how this would operate in practice
- The commissioning fund be allocated fairly across the entire district

I fully support the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee expressed above and I have attached a full copy of the minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 October 2011. A copy of the report can be accessed via our website www.shepway.gov.uk

I am of course happy to work with you to find a solution and feel that working collaboratively at a local level will maximise the impact of the service in the community and achieve the best value for money.

If you would like any further information or further clarification from either myself or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee then please contact a member of Democratic Services on 01303 853241 or committee@shepway.gov.uk

Yours Faithfully,



Cllr Stuart Peall
Cabinet Member for Sport, Culture and Community Safety



**Comments from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Regarding the
Proposed Changes to Kent Youth Services**

Presentations made by KCC to:

- Children and Young People Members' Working Group
- Local Strategic Partnership

Consultation documents and presentation circulated to:

- Management Board
- Management Team
- Cabinet Members

This consultation response approved by:

- Management Board
- Cabinet Members
- Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Rural Communities

1. The Youth Hub

1.1 Overall, respondents were supportive of the proposed development of a youth hub in the centre of Tunbridge Wells, noting that this would meet the recommendation made following the Tunbridge Wells

Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Review into Youth and Alcohol. A youth hub in the town centre would improve central provision in the largest town in the district. The town centre is also easily accessible by public transport from the edge of the town, although access from the rural towns and villages can be challenging, particularly in the evenings.

- 1.2 A central hub would allow for better joint provision and partnership working in a range of areas, which would be of benefit to young people. However, some respondents queried how the hub is to be funded given that this may incur substantial capital costs in a time of economic pressure.
- 1.3 In the rural areas the impacts of the proposed hub may be less positive. In Paddock Wood, the youth centre at Mascall's will no longer be used by KCC and 'may' be used by a commissioned provider. We accept that KCC is withdrawing from the use of the centre as it is unsuitable, however we are unclear how then it can therefore be seen as suitable for other providers to use.
- 1.4 At the LSP meeting a discussion took place regarding a possible HOUSE model should a permanent site for the hub not be possible. Respondents present at this meeting were supportive of this idea due to the popularity of HOUSE and the potential for joint working. However, this would need further consideration as to the geographical area within which HOUSE would move (town centre, whole town or whole borough), the frequency and the associated cost.

2. Street based Projects

- 2.1 Respondents were in general supportive of the intention for KCC to continue to deliver a street based project in the borough.
- 2.2 Respondents expressed a wish to see the Streetcruizer bus continue to be used in conjunction with street based work, particularly in the rural areas and to a greater degree than it is currently used. This is reflected in numerous requests from Parishes for the Streetcruizer to visit their area.
- 2.3 TWBC would like to work closely with KCC with regards to the street based projects and to assist in identifying the areas for delivery and co-ordinating the use of the Streetcruizer.
- 2.4 Respondents felt more information was required regarding the level of provision, i.e. it is not clear whether the same, less or more hours of delivery will be provided in the borough under the proposed new service delivery.
- 2.5 Some respondents also sought clarification on existing provision in peripheral areas of the town, e.g. Rusthall, Sherwood, Showfields – it is not clear whether these areas would now fall into a geographical catchment area of the hub or if they would still be eligible for street based provision.
- 2.6 It is accepted that as street based provision is finite, providing services in areas close to the hub will prevent those services being provided elsewhere such as the rural areas.

3. Commissioned Services

- 3.1 Some respondents did express concerns that outsourcing provision maybe based on the need to reduce budgets rather than to improve services and sought reassurance that services will be high quality with the appropriate amount of monitoring and support from KCC.
- 3.2 Respondents were supportive of the proposal to support smaller, local providers rather than pan-Kent or West Kent providers although some felt that partnership and cross boundary working should be considered where this was financially viable and in the best interests of the community.
- 3.3 Respondents felt that the commissioning process needed to be able to allow smaller providers to competitively bid. Funding needed to facilitate an adequate run in time and be for a suitable period in order to allow smaller providers to develop proposals and compete effectively.
- 3.4 The needs analysis provided as part of the consultation does not go into sufficient depth in terms of needs of young people in the borough and does not cover specific issues such as health, education or employment.
- 3.5 A full needs analysis incorporating such issues would offer commissioners and providers a framework to use for commissioning and consequently enable better services to be commissioned.
- 3.6 This framework could then also be used by the Locality board if appropriate to link into and draw resources from other services such as health, education, statutory partners and the community and voluntary sector.

3.7 Several schemes currently approach TWBC for community grants in relation to youth work. It may be appropriate for close liaison between TWBC and KCC to ensure prevention of duplication or to maximise resources in some areas.

3.8 Respondents also feel that the allocation of commissioning funds should not be made purely on the basis of income deprivation. Following the research of Marmot with regards to public health, it is 'proportionate universalism' which stands the greatest chance of reducing inequalities and therefore the needs and concerns of young people living in areas seen as 'more affluent' should be considered in the same way as those in more financially challenged areas.

4. General comments

4.1 Paddock Wood and other towns and villages in the borough will have provision made up entirely of street based (depending on availability) and commissioned providers. This has the potential to result in a disjointed or 'mixed bag' of provision and every effort should be made to avoid this.

4.2 There is a risk of young people being uncertain of where or how to access services. Therefore, perhaps a central database or website could be used, accessed via KCC, in order to make it easier for young people to find local providers and what is available at that provider e.g. C-Card points, specialist advice, particular activities etc.

4.3 There may also be a concern among parents regarding the quality or reliability of the providers, particularly if it is unclear that the provider is

commissioned by KCC. Consideration should be made into how parents and young people can be offered reassurance of the quality control of the providers and the basis on which they were commissioned.

Contact Officer:

Helen Wolstenholme,

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Cllr M Hill
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My ref:
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Date: 28 October 2011

Gravesham Borough Council response to the Kent County Council consultation on the provision of Youth Services in the borough

Dear Cllr. Hill

Gravesham Borough Council would like to submit the following for consideration as part of the process that Kent County Council has embarked on to consult on proposals to change the way service for young people are delivered in Gravesham.

1. Background

- 1.1 The feeling is that the "hub" proposal as set out within the Kent County Council proposal does not necessarily work for Gravesham. A number of agencies have spent many years creating a sophisticated and interlinked provision that includes a significant outreach content which Gravesham Borough Council feels ought to be at least retained if not enhanced. Specifically the Council would not wish to see any diminution of the specialised weekly service for young people from ethnic and minority communities or those from whom we do not hear from very easily in other settings such as the Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC) or through the specialist partnership-driven services delivered through the GR@ND.
- 1.2 The Council is also concerned for the provision in rural areas, much of which is served either through detached provision or support from VCS: those organisations in the VCS arena currently delivering might not be in a place to necessarily "tender" for work and retaining the goodwill and expertise of the volunteers presently filling those gaps is seen as essential.
- 1.3 If it becomes clear that a hub is a requirement then the Council feels that a town centre based facility from which services could be delivered is more logical, cost effective and therefore sustainable to something that is sited in the west of the borough: this is also what the Gravesham Youth Council has indicated would be their preference.
- 1.4 The understanding is that the "hub" is not necessarily intended to be the centre of provision (or is it? – that still remains unclear) and as the proposed site (Northfleet Youth Centre) is close to two large BSF schools which could provide excellent alternative sport provision, which it is understood was one of the core criteria used when assessing existing buildings and so provided part of the rationale behind keeping the Northfleet centre, the facilities in those schools could be used for those activities. Encouraging the use of such purpose-built

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facilities for just the time they are needed has to be more economical than the full-time maintenance of a just-in-case building.

- 1.5 In any event, there could be an alternative use for the Northfleet building and a discussion with Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) might prove fruitful in that respect.
- 1.6 Although the rationale behind the proposal for basing the hub in Northfleet is that this is the area of densest habitation of young people, this Council is aware that there are elements of local "territorialism", which while, anecdotal, tricky and not necessarily what the Council would wish to encourage, have to be acknowledged and there is ample evidence that young people find the town centre neutral.
- 1.7 It would be useful to get the views of others on this alternative suggestion and the current time scale does not allow for this.
- 1.8 As teenage pregnancy is a priority issue for Gravesham thought needs to be given during the creation of a commissioning strategy as to how sensitive topics such as sexual health and contraceptive services will be included within all provision for young people: there is already a long-standing provision through the partnership arrangement of the GR@ND which is well established in the town centre and which is "at risk" under these proposals, this too needs rethinking.
- 1.9 While there is an understanding that some sort of structure, which has a county resonance, is a good place to start a discussion, the reality for Gravesham would be that the Council would want the Gravesham Locality Board to be at the heart of any final decision about service provision. Whatever the decision about this is, the design for service needs to be taken at a Gravesham level, involving all parties, not just those in the county statutory sector, with local needs at the heart of the decision-making and commissioning process.

2. Alternative proposal

- 2.1 Gravesham Borough Council would therefore like to suggest a discussion which explores an option whereby all the funds allocated for this area, *including* the finances set aside to support the infrastructure and the core management function, are devolved to the Gravesham Locality Board in entirety: in effect shifting to a wholly commissioned model from day one.
- 2.2 If it is felt that the Locality Board is not currently in a position to act in this respect then Gravesham Borough Council is prepared to act as "responsible authority" for such funds until such time as the Locality Board is in a position to take over this function. There are precedents for this arrangement as the Council already operates in this fashion with other statutory providers such as Public Health.
- 2.3 If this can be agreed as a principle, the Council suggests that the Locality Board would then be tasked to prioritise local need as defined above through the implementation of known information and pull together a local partnership to deliver on those needs, some examples of which are mentioned above.
- 2.4 To understand and create a basis for local need the Council suggests that the Gravesham Locality Board seeks opinions from all the people and organisations across the borough to determine the "shape" of a service for young people in Gravesham which the Board would then agree and commission: the Council is happy for the Gravesham Locality Board to work with KCC to decide on, agree and implement an appropriate reporting mechanism within which this arrangement would exist.

- 2.5 There are third-sector organisations, an example of which might be Gravesham Network Development Community Interest Company formerly known as the GR@ND, which are currently directly involved in the delivery of services for young people that, with some discussion, could accommodate the operational details of such a proposal. This option could also provide a low-cost, low risk town centre facility that would meet the needs of many young people while serving as a hub for enhanced outreach / detached provision and keeping building overheads to a minimum thus allowing maximum investment in services.
- 2.6 Opting for this route will ensure a smooth transition, account for governance and employ staff. With agreement of their Boards third sector organisations could also be in a position to negotiate a lease on existing buildings with KCC (such as Miracles) **or at least agree how such facilities might be decommissioned if that turns out to be the result of the needs assessment.** This arrangement would ensure that local needs are reacted to and monitored within the borough, thus providing a level of flexibility and good value services.
- 2.7 This approach would also provide KCC with the savings it is seeking through a reduction in central costs, while enabling the best use of available funds to facilitate the development of local solutions, which can reflect and react directly to the needs of young people within their communities. Gravesham already has strong links with its Local Children's Trust Board, has a very successful Youth Forum, and has a long tradition of commissioning services with local providers in a very cost effective manner through the GR@ND which the Council would point to as evidence of capability.

Gravesham Borough Council thanks you for this opportunity to put forward its view on this significant opportunity to radically re-align the way services for young people are designed and delivered in this borough.

Yours sincerely



Service Manager (Communities)

Response to Kent Youth Service consultation.

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19th October 2011

Mike Hill OBE
KCC Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities

Dear Mr Hill,

Re: Transforming Kent's Youth Service: Consultation Response

Thank you for your invitation to respond to the above consultation I am responding on behalf of DDC, having also held discussions at the Shadow Dover District Locality Board (SDDLB). I welcome the opportunity to write with the comments and thoughts on the Kent Youth Service 'service transformation proposal'.

Having worked through the consultation documents and discussed at length proposals, including with the attendance of yourself, Mr Sandhu and Mr Baker, the SDDLB acknowledges the need for savings to be made to the current youth service offer and the assurances given that the consultation is genuine with no pre determination of outcomes until all responses have been received and given careful consideration.

I would like to note concern over the timetable of implementing and approving any changes, we would stress that a decision made by December 2011 and then invites for tendering is not a sufficient length of time for new proposals to be worked up and further consulted on with local communities. Voluntary and community groups, together with any existing and/or emerging social enterprises or other alternative service providers will no doubt require more time and support to enable a sustainable and effective tender.

We agree wholeheartedly with the intention of the statement "power and influence must be in the hands of local people and local communities so they are more able to take responsibility for their own community and service needs, such as creating new social enterprise" and hence would like to propose a service option that we feel would better meet the needs and diversity of our district as compared to others.

The County offer is a hybrid model comprising a core offer in each district and a commissioned element of youth work. We strongly believe an holistically commissioned proposal will deliver an improved service with far greater potential for value for money, a coherent approach to the entirety of youth service provision across the district to best meet the communities needs and outcomes. We believe this model can be commissioned through the Locality Board, acknowledging the governance arrangements will continue to define the service as a KCC service, but supported and enabled by local delivery. We agree the need for ongoing quality assurance will take place through the Locality Board.

Dover District Council has already played a large part in influencing and enabling the extremely good work already taking place throughout the district, for example the very successful Youth HQ in central Dover and the huge intervention of the Community Safety Partnership over the last 5 years, which is now seeing real results across the District. We would like to build on this good practice and believe this is a great opportunity for the Locality Board to make local decisions/recommendations to deliver improved youth service provision.

This devolution will be a first and a real test for the remit of Locality Boards and the functions and roles/responsibilities both County and Districts have agreed to explore. Dover District Council is already, with Kent County Council, an 'early implementer' for Health and Wellbeing Boards, a strong partnership that is progressing apace and in the forefront of national and local policy development. We believe that this continued approach to partnership working increases the offer and value for money of projects delivered in the district, and as such will

be linking the youth service proposals in with the HWBB developments, including public health discussions, to ensure an integrated approach to best deliver the outcomes needed in the district.

In order to fully develop a wholly commissioned model we would like to request resources to enable a pilot model to be to identify an umbrella group/social enterprise partner to develop a tender for the commissioning pot. The Dover District Youth Strategy contains vital information and was written by young people in the District – this, plus further consultation results, and central data/intelligence shall be used to inform the development.

We request complete clarity from KCC as to the total available funding for Dover District youth service provision.

With regards the outcomes framework we agree in principle to the majority of the outcomes at a strategic overarching level. However we do have concerns as to how the Kent Youth Service proposal adds value to these outcomes over and above what is already the existing level of service provision within the district. We would also like to be included in any dialogue as to how these outcomes will be measured and the creation of more local specific outcomes to meet the needs and issues identified locally, acknowledging that each District will have a different starting point and different priorities.

We do however have genuine concerns around Outcome 4.2, on page 23 of the proposal document (*'Young people should have access to dedicated spaces over which they are able to exercise a degree of ownership. These spaces should be suitable for a range of educational and recreational leisure activities as described in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. These spaces should primarily be available for positive activities during the hours of 6pm and 10pm weekday evenings and during the weekend. These dedicated spaces could be supplemented by the delivery of positive activities in a range of locations suitable to the local community context of the young people'*), we feel this is too prescriptive and will ultimately pre-determine the outcome of the consultation, plus potentially being exclusive at the local level, for example, with a high under 18 yrs conception rate and NEETs figures. We feel a more generic outcome should be identified that is more flexible to local demand.

Should, despite our overarching wish to have the best outcomes delivered locally by the best provider, the consultation outcome be to proceed with a hybrid model, we would request the decision on the core offer model location and scope be devolved to the DDLB in order to maintain and meet the statement "power and influence must be in the hands of local people and local communities so they are more able to take responsibility for their own community and service needs, such as creating new social enterprise". For example, we do not believe it would be the best use of resources to have what would effectively be two 'hubs' operating in Dover – the Youth HQ is developing very successfully in central Dover and is more accessible to those not in education, employment or training than a school located provision. We would ask that consideration is given to locating the 'hub' provision in Deal, which is both an area of need and also a location that in consultation young people across the District have identified as more accessible. We would also ask that consideration is given, with regards a potential loss of buildings currently used for youth service provision, to a service provision regardless of physical site, being maintained in our core identified areas of Dover, Deal, Aylesham and Sandwich (not excluding outreach work).

We welcome the opportunity to engage in further dialogue and partnership working with KCC and the Kent Youth Service as we go forward with the agreed outcome of seeking savings whilst delivering an improved youth service for the Dover district. We request an early response to our queries and proposals outlined in this letter to take forward resultant workstreams.

Cllr Paul Watkins,
Leader, Dover District Council

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Baker, Nigel - CC SI

From: Lesley Bowles [lesley.bowles@sevenoaks.gov.uk]
Sent: 31 October 2011 17:36
To: KYS Consultation - EX CMY
Cc: Baker, Nigel - CC SI
Subject: Youth Service Consultation
Importance: High

Dear Nigel

Thank you for consulting us about the future of the youth service in Kent.

Our comments are as follows:

The District Council supports the idea of a funding pot for services to be commissioned by Local Members, for example through a new Locality Board. This will enable the maximum value to be obtained from the funds available. There is a wide variety of need and of providers in the District and local knowledge will ensure that funding for services is appropriately channelled so that local needs are met and dovetail with other funded services.

We do not agree that the provision suggested in the consultation for the whole County necessarily represents the best way forward for Sevenoaks District and that there should be some flexibility here. Each District is different in terms of its physical provision and needs. With no community youth worker currently in place, it may be that the funding for this post could better be used in another way through the commissioning pot. It may be that, in the longer term, better joint use of buildings could facilitate a better customer experience and greater sustainability of funding. The model put forward for consultation could be much more flexible to meet local needs.

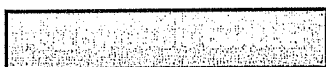
In the absence of information about how much funding would be available to commission local services, it is difficult to know whether the formula the County is proposing is beneficial to this District or not. Sevenoaks District suffers from the perception that it is an affluent District and this means that service users in need are not as well provided-for as elsewhere in the County and there is consequently a higher call on youth service funding in this District than elsewhere.

The proportion of students travelling outside the District to attend schools in Dartford, Gravesham, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells as well as across the border in Surrey, is high. There are only 3 secondary schools in the District. Transport out of the District is generally only provided at school times which means there is no access to after school provision for those young people who have to use the school bus. Without access to an after school community at their school, young people must rely on provision in their local community. Again, for those young people in need, this represents a higher call on youth service funding in this District than elsewhere and we would urge you to consider this when deciding upon commissioning allocations to each District.

Sevenoaks District has an excellent track record of working in partnership, across and within sectors. This Summer, the District Council, our biggest community organisation, West Kent Extra, our voluntary sector infra-structure organisation, Voluntary Action Within Kent, our town and parish councils, and the County Youth Service joined forces to provide a well-publicised, well-attended and affordable summer programme for children and young people. This was well-received and achieved through minimal funding contributions by each organisation.

This approach, together with the added value that can be brought into play through Community Safety, health and other funding streams, means that a comprehensive and seamless service can be provided by working together, for example through a Locality Board, to commission services.

Lesley Bowles
Head of Community Development
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
RECORD OF DECISION OF THE
CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND LEISURE SERVICES

Decision Made: 04 November 2011

YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION

Issue for Decision

To consider Kent County Council's (KCC) proposed changes and reductions to youth provision within the borough, particularly the proposals to withdraw from two of its three youth centres, and to feedback to KCC the views of stakeholders, young people and residents.

Decision Made

1. That KCC is asked to re-consider its proposals for Maidstone regarding the reduction in the number of youth centres from three to one and the decrease in detached youth work.
2. That the Manor, Shepway Youth and Community Centre rather than Infozone be identified as the "hub" for Maidstone if youth centre reductions are made.
3. That KCC ensure that Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is given the opportunity to jointly commission youth services in future, from voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises.

Reasons for Decision

MBC acknowledges the challenging financial climate for all councils following the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010. The proposed changes to the youth service amount to an overall £900,000 funding reduction across Kent commencing in April 2012. However, MBC is concerned that cutting youth services at a time when youth unemployment is rising, will have a lasting and negative impact on Maidstone Borough's young people and communities. In addition, Maidstone has the second largest youth population in Kent and the proposed reductions will therefore have a disproportionately adverse impact on the borough's young people.

There is strong support from residents for increasing rather than reducing youth provision. MBC's Community Development Team has recently consulted young people, parents and other stakeholders on-line and at a number of youth events in the borough since August.

- There were 916 respondents with 81% currently users of a youth facility in the borough.
- 59% use youth centres to hang out/meet friends or to have fun and only 7% to get advice. Although the percentage for getting advice is lower than expected, they do get information while having fun/meeting friends.
- When asked the question: 'KCC are proposing to withdraw from Shepway Youth and Community Centre and Lenham Youth Centre and operate from a hub at Infozone. Do you agree with this proposal?' 74% either 'strongly disagreed' or 'disagreed' with the proposal, 6% either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed', while the remaining 18% stated 'don't know'.
- When asked the question: 'Do you think you would use the proposed hub Infozone', 27% said they would, while 47% said they wouldn't.
- Asked about alternative uses for the buildings that KCC would be withdrawing from, 44% supported them being taken over by or sold to another youth organisation or charity.
- Nearly 90% of the respondents were under 18 years old.

These results are reflected in previous consultations that have informed other plans and strategies within the borough including the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Maidstone Borough 2009-20:

- In the SCS, 43% of respondents listed 'Increase youth facilities and services' (p27 4.4.4) within their top three priorities, more than any other objective.
- 41% of respondents to the Place Survey identified activities for teenagers as 'most in need of improving', placing this priority only third behind road and pavement repairs and traffic congestion.
- 'Youth issues and ASB' were the highest priority (27%) for residents responding to PACT surveys carried out by the police in 2007/8.

The SCS also states (p40): 'During 2008 Maidstone had the fourth highest number/rate of entrants into the youth justice system of any district in Kent, and experienced a significant increase in numbers between 2007 and 2008. There are some areas which have significantly higher numbers of young offenders. High Street ward has the highest rates, followed by South and Park Wood wards. Park Wood and High Street had respectively the 3rd and 4th highest rate of any wards in Kent of young people known to the Youth Offending Service (May 2007). Shepway North and Shepway South Wards also appear in the worst 10% of wards in Kent.'

These priorities are reflected in KCC's report 'Transforming Kent's Youth Service' Appendix 6¹ which states: 'The Draft Local Children's Trust Board Children and Young People's Plan 2011 - 2014 for Maidstone identifies the rate of teenage conception, the proportion of NEETs and the engagement of young offenders in suitable education and training as key issues under the theme of Adolescent Engagement.'

MBC is concerned that cutting youth services in Shepway and Lenham may exacerbate anti-social behaviour by young people, youth unemployment and teenage conceptions, undermining the ability to achieve key shared priorities.

When reviewing the approach that KCC took to scoring the current youth centre provision as set out in its Frequently Asked Questions paper² (p6), the difference in the scores was minimal with Infozone scoring 69 and Shepway 67. In other parts of Kent a score of 67 would have been sufficient to be chosen as a hub. Further, it is felt that the scoring failed to take account of a number of advantages that the Manor, Shepway Youth and Community Centre has over Infozone not least that it is the only significant youth facility on the estate. According to information provided by KCC, Shepway also has slightly lower running costs £88,500 compared to Infozone £92,600. It is also felt that the 'availability and quality of youth work space' at Shepway is greater than at Infozone. There is also greater security of tenure with Shepway as the facility is owned by MBC whereas Infozone has been earmarked for disposal by KCC - albeit that disposal may not take place for a while during the current property recession. The facilities at Shepway that aren't available at Infozone include:

- a substantial sports hall;
- an outdoor multi-use games area/ball court;
- access to open space including football pitches;
- substantial free off-street car parking;
- as well as youth club facilities that are at least equal in scope and size to those offered at Infozone.

Further, while MBC would rather KCC maintain both facilities, on balance it feels that there is already significant alternative and improving provision within the town centre where Infozone is based. It is felt that the commissioning budget could be better utilised in the town centre to enhance existing provision and detached youth work. These facilities include:

- Switch Youth Café;
- Connexions;
- Porchlight (homeless charity);

¹ <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/education-and-learning/kent-youth-service/KYS%20Transformation%20Consultation%20Full%20Document.pdf>

² https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/education-and-learning/kent-youth-service/Kent%20Youth%20Service%20Transformation_FAQ.pdf

- VSU (volunteering agency for young people) at the Howard de Walden Centre, Blewett Street;
- A range of commercial and not-for profit outlets catering for young people including a multi-plex cinema, coffee shops, bowling alley, recording studio/rehearsal rooms, theatre and youth theatre.

KCC's proposals also include a commitment to retain a street based/detached youth work team in Maidstone Borough. While this is a reduction from the current two teams (rural and urban), the council will continue to support the work of this team and support the proposal to have a Community Youth Tutor – possibly based at the Senacre Skills and Community Centre – encouraging young people from the neighbouring deprived areas to access this centre with its focus on skills and training.

It should be noted that a petition has been submitted to MBC by 421 residents from Shepway stating: 'We the undersigned petition the council to re-consider its proposal to withdraw services to the Manor, Shepway Youth and Community Centre, Maidstone. This facility is vital to the youth of the area and it is envisaged withdrawal would lead to increased anti-social behaviour.'

While the formal closing date for the submission is 29th October 2011, KCC have said that they will give an extension until 4th November to allow for our decision making process to take its course.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

The council acknowledges that as it owns the Manor, Shepway Youth and Community Centre, it may be possible, to commission a third party provider to continue to run and even expand the centre potentially utilising some of the proposed KCC commissioning budget. However, this is not considered to be the best use of the reduced resources available for Maidstone borough.


There is concern that KCC's proposed commissioning budget of £1.2 million will not be allocated appropriately across the Kent districts. Maidstone Borough has the 2nd largest population of young people of any district in Kent which does not even represent 1/12th of the total budget (12 Kent Districts). It is anticipated that the commissioning budget is likely to be in the region of £80-90,000. There is a also concern that commissioning budgets will be vulnerable to future cuts as local authority budgets are further squeezed. Positively KCC officers have stated that their ideal commissioning framework is that youth services will be commissioned with a minimum three year Service Level Agreement as commissioning on an annually renewable contract/SLA will not give third party providers the security to enable them to employ staff, seek grants or provide certainty to users and local communities. This intention has not yet however been confirmed.

Background Papers

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough 2009 to 2020.

Transforming Kent's Youth Service, a Vision for the Future, KCC, August 2011 <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/education-and-learning/kent-youth-service/KYS%20Transformation%20Consultation%20Full%20Document.pdf>

Signed



Councillor John A Wilson
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

Date

4 November 2011

The Cabinet Member determined his decision was urgent because the closing date for submission of the KCC's Consultation is 04 November 2011. In accordance with Paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules of the Constitution, the Mayor, in consultation with the head of Paid Service and the Chairman of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, agreed that the decision was reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to call-in.



Councillor Christopher Garland
Leader of the Council

Councillor Mike Hill
Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities
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11 January 2012

Dear Mike,

I understand you are due to take a decision shortly regarding the future provision of integrated youth services across the County. You will have received a formal response to the consultation from Cllr John Wilson, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services stating clearly Maidstone Borough Council's position in relation to the current provision in the borough, in particular in Shepway.

It has been brought to my attention by officers, that the borough council's response may have appeared to suggest that the council does not support a "hub" at Infozone and that it should be based at Shepway. I feel it is important to clarify that the council's position is concerned more with ensuring the current level of provision at Shepway is preserved and protected rather than the location of the hub.

The consultation proposal seemed to suggest the choice on offer was either Infozone or Shepway or Lenham, rather than an opportunity to have a hub at one of the locations, with the ability, via the commissioning process and the service specification, to ensure that the level of service at Shepway is maintained.

I would also wish to ensure that the remainder of the provision across the borough is based on identified need and resources allocated accordingly, taking into account the current provision at Lenham and the associated need.

I trust you will find my clarification helpful in making your decision on youth provision in Maidstone.

Kindest regards

Councillor Christopher Garland
Leader of the Council

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