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**By:** Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities  
Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Customer and Communities

**To:** Cabinet – 18 July 2011

**Subject:** Kent Youth Service  
Commissioning Model Public Consultation

**Classification:** UNRESTRICTED

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## Introduction

1. (1) The attached proposal for consultation outlines the vision for the transformation of Kent Youth Service and the innovative model of service delivery. This new approach combines excellence in direct delivery with commissioned, local providers to deliver creative approaches for young people to engage in youth work opportunities in their communities.

(2) The decision to move to a Commissioning Model will have a twofold impact: first, the model will involve a significantly different method of delivery for youth work activities in Kent and second, the proposed model will realise approximately £1m reduction in spend on Youth Service budgets. This new model will impact upon a large number of young people and their communities by creating an environment in which enterprising local people or groups can take the opportunity to manage and shape their youth services.

## Relevant priority outcomes

2. (1) 'Bold Steps for Kent' outlines the medium term plan for Kent County Council for the next four years; one of its three aims is to 'put the citizen in control':

*"...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".*

(2) In line with this aim, the attached Service Transformation Proposal seeks to commission a range of providers to deliver youth work within local communities. The proposal sets out the intended outcomes for young people and the communities in which they live as the core of the commissioning process.

## **Financial Implications**

- 3. (1)** The process of changing the model of delivery to a new commissioning approach will contribute significantly to the £1.4m savings identified in the Medium Term Plan for Youth and Youth Offending Services. The 2011/12 budget book identifies the Youth Service net budget as £6.096m; the net budget for the Youth Offending Service is £3.592m.
- (2)** The increase in commissioning is being funded through a reduction in direct delivery of £1.7m and increasing the existing Partnership Awards funding by more than £800k; the other £900k will make the bulk of the Youth Service contribution to the £1.4m identified above, with the remainder coming from management and efficiency savings. The final result will be a total commissioning budget for youth work of approximately £1.2m.
- (3)** The remainder of savings to be made from the Youth Service and Youth Offending Service (£500k) under the Medium Term Plan are to be found through a process of integrating senior management and support functions.
- (4)** KCC Youth Centres are required to raise a certain amount of income from the letting of rooms, fees and charges to cover full running costs (including premises, service delivery and equipment hire). An excess of almost £500k has been accumulated and this sum has been used to create a new reserve which has been committed to the development and capacity building of the voluntary youth sector and the implementation of pilot projects in order to support the development of commissioned youth work provision.

## **Legal Implications**

- 4. (1)** The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 6) places a duty on local authorities to provide for young people aged 13-19 (and up to 24 for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) sufficient recreational and educational leisure time activities and facilities for the improvement of young people's well-being and their personal and social development.
- (2)** The completion of an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and effective consultation with affected communities is essential risk management as well as good practice. Policy changes in other local authority areas have been subject to challenge through Judicial Review; for example, the London Councils' reduction in voluntary sector funding has been required by Mr Justice Calvert-Smith to recommence a full consultation process with all affected community organisations after being judged to have carried out an inadequate EIA process.
- (3)** The EIA initial screening took place in April 2010 and as a result, due to the size and scale of the transformation process, a full EIA will be

required. The consultation element of the full screening will take place alongside the public consultation of the Service Transformation Proposal in order to ensure that communities are able to respond to local issues.

(4) The process of transformation may be subject to issues arising from the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, both the Community 'right to challenge' and the Community 'right to buy'. The former will give communities the right to run local authorities, whilst the latter allows the bidding for local assets deemed of value to the local community.

## **Main body and purpose of report**

5. (1) This paper follows on from the 'Kent Youth Service: Service Transformation report' which received support at Cabinet on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

(2) Cabinet requested that a full proposal of the proposal for the Commissioning Model be submitted for endorsement. The Service Transformation Proposal is included at Appendix A and is based on the principle of a radical and innovative model for the future delivery of youth work in Kent – this Commissioning Model will involve considerably less direct delivery with an increased emphasis on the process of intelligent, outcome based, commissioning from an increased range and style of providers. As such, the new model provides greater opportunities for citizens to engage with and manage the delivery of their local youth services whilst maintaining the necessary strategic infrastructure to ensure sustainability.

(3) The proposed commissioning model will have some impact on staff, services users, partners and stakeholders. It is therefore a requirement to consult these groups over 90 days as part of the process of service transformation. The consultation is proposed to take place for all of the affected groups in parallel from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011 to 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011, full details of the process, consultation materials and groups to be consulted are included at Appendix E.

(4) Further, due to the proposed impacts on KCC staff the HR implications and processes are included at Appendix C

## **Consultation and Communication**

6. (1) This paper requests Cabinet endorsement for staff and public consultation on the attached Youth Service Transformation Proposal. As the proposal involves a significant reduction in staffing establishment, there will be a formal [90 day] consultation with staff and unions. At the same time, a consultation with partners and affected communities will be carried out. To further maximise this opportunity, the EIA will run concurrently.

## **Risk and Business Continuity Management**

7. (1) Kent County Council has a national reputation for the delivery of high quality and effective Youth Services as recognised by Ofsted and the National Youth Agency. There is a significant risk to the quality and capacity of service delivery at the outset of the new Commissioning Model. It is intended to mitigate this risk through a process of supporting organisations within the Voluntary and Community Sector to develop to a position where they can competitively tender for contracts.
- (2) During the process of reducing direct delivery and increasing commissioning, decisions will need to be taken on a case-by-case basis on the use of existing KCC-owned youth centres. Whilst the potential for these properties to continue to be used for youth work and community purposes is a positive, it requires the retention of a certain capital risk for the local authority. A corporate approach to enable transfer of assets to communities will need to be developed to support this process following the results of consultation.
- (3) The transition period from directly delivered provision to a range of commissioned providers will require careful management to ensure that quality of provision is not adversely affected and that relationships with the local community continue to be supported.
- (4) Whilst considerable work is planned to support and develop capacity amongst local youth work providers, there remains a risk that the market will not be strong enough to commence full delivery at the date the new Commissioning Model comes into effect.
- (5) The timescales highlighted in Appendix A raise the risk of not being able to meet the required full year savings in the 2012/13 financial year. This risk can be mitigated in 2 ways: firstly, the directly delivered element can be reduced six weeks before the commissioned element commences giving a skeleton service during the summer holidays and therefore recouping some savings. Secondly, the Service would need to identify alternative funds to support the initial element of commissioned provision and therefore offset unachieved savings.

### **Sustainability Implications**

8. (1) The ability to provide a mixed economy of high quality youth opportunities for young people to engage in youth work is crucial to meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, and is proven to promote personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion.

### **Conclusion**

9. (1) This paper and its appendices set out the vision and operational model for a radical new way for KCC to continue to support positive

outcomes for the young people of Kent and the communities in which they live. Following the endorsement of Cabinet, a full consultation of the public and staff will commence. Upon completion of this process and the incorporation of the findings of consultation, a Cabinet Member decision will be taken on the new delivery model within an overall structure of Integrated Youth Services in the county.

## **Recommendation**

- 10. (1)** This paper seeks the endorsement of Cabinet Members for a 90 day staff and public consultation on the attached proposal which contains the details for the transformation of Kent Youth Service from a directly delivered model to one combining commissioning and direct delivery. As a result of the consultation process, the Service Transformation Proposal will be reworked where required and will be followed by a Cabinet Member decision to proceed with the Service transformation and concurrent restructuring and tendering processes.

## **Background Documents**

- 11. Appendix A:** Service Transformation Proposal (including timescales)  
**Appendix B:** Needs Analysis and Outcomes Framework for the Commissioning of youth work in Kent (including area-based appendices)  
**Appendix C:** Service Transformation Personnel and HR Implications (including Job Descriptions and Structure Charts)  
**Appendix D:** EIA Initial Screening  
**Appendix E:** Service Transformation Consultation Plan

Director:  
Angela Slaven  
Director of Service Improvement  
Telephone: 01622 221696  
Email: [angela.slaven@kent.gov.uk](mailto:angela.slaven@kent.gov.uk)

Contact Officer:  
Nigel Baker  
Head of Integrated Youth Services  
Telephone: 01622 696569  
Email: [nigel.baker@kent.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.baker@kent.gov.uk)