

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL - RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY

Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities

DECISION NO.

11/01698

If decision is likely to disclose exempt information please specify the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Subject:

The Future of Youth Services in Kent

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities I hereby agree that Kent County Council will exercise it's statutory duty to provide educational leisure-time activities for young people by:

- Proceeding with the implementation of a new model of service delivery that will combine the best of KCC's work through the delivery of a core KCC offer of open-access youth work alongside local commitment, energy and creativity supported by a newly created commissioning fund.
- Continue the delivery of key county services which offer a range of opportunities to young people through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, Kent Youth County Council and Kent's Outdoor Education Centres.
- KCC undertaking joint work with boroughs/districts and Locality Boards to define what youth work provision is required at a local level during the first months of 2012. During this process, exploring and identifying where common outcomes can assist in aligning budgets and resources for the commissioning process.
- KCC Officers seeking the endorsement of Locality Boards for local youth work outcome frameworks during March 2012.
- Developing a commissioning framework which ensures the equality of opportunity for small and emerging organisations and social enterprises when tendering to deliver youth work activities within their communities.
- Allocating funds for the commissioning of youth work activities at a district or borough level using the methodology of the Resource Allocation Model.
- KCC, district and borough officers and Locality Boards ensuring the engagement of young people as decision makers and evaluators of directly delivered and commissioned youth work activities.
- KCC, district and borough officers and Locality Boards taking full account of the recommendations of the Equality Impact Assessment when agreeing outcomes frameworks and commissioning youth work activities for young people.
- KCC's Property Group developing a means by which voluntary and community organisations will be able to lease buildings (at a sustainable cost and with suitable length of lease) in time for the approval of the commissioning process on 1st April 2012.
- Shaping and implementing the new model by 1st January 2013 in close cooperation with colleagues in the boroughs and districts and other partner organisations to ensure that local needs and priorities remain at the heart of what young people will be able to access.

Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken

None

Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information

Under the Education Act 2006 (Section 1, subsection 6) the Local Education Authority has a function in respect of Youth Work whereby it must secure for qualifying young persons sufficient educational leisure-time activities for the improvement of their well-being and sufficient facilities for such activities. The duty to provide these services was reiterated by the Education Select Committee (June 2011) and that Committee has also recommended (October 2011) the Government consider how it will judge and intervene in areas where this duty has not been fulfilled.

The Education Select Committee identified that evidence shows that open-access services can sometimes be as effective as targeted ones in reaching vulnerable young people and that both can perform similarly life-changing roles in young people's lives. As such this committee has recommended Local Authorities recognise that an open-access service could be more appropriate than a targeted one for improving certain outcomes for young people and take this into consideration when commissioning services.

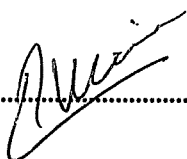
The model described during consultation sought to effectively carry out this duty by the provision of open-access services which also offer the opportunity for additional support to more vulnerable young people. At the same time the proposal recognised the need for local people to take part in the design and delivery of services by proposing the commissioning of youth work at a local level.

A central aim of the proposed model is to encourage a wide range of local providers to develop new and innovative methods of working with young people which are relevant to local contexts. In this way it is hoped that local communities will grow in confidence and resilience as they become providers of services as well as consumers.

The attached decision report provides a detailed summary and analysis of the consultation response, of which full account has been taken in making this decision.

Background Documents:

1. Education Select Committee. 3rd Report, Services for Young People Volume 1.
2. Education Select Committee. 6th Report, Services for Young People: The Government Response.
3. Ofsted: An evaluation of approaches to commissioning young people's services, August 2011.

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signed 

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date 12 January 2012

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Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration of Decision Published	