

| <b>Mayor and Cabinet</b> |   |                 |                 |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Title</b>             | Response of Executive Directors for Children and Young People and Community Services to issues raised by the Children and Young People and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committees on Reshaping Youth Services |                 |                 |
| <b>Contributors</b>      | Executive Director for Children and Young People<br>Executive Director for Community Services   | <b>Item No.</b> |                 |
| <b>Class</b>             | Part 1  | <b>Date</b>     | 15 January 2014 |

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the response of the Executive Directors for Children and Young People and Community Services to the comments and views of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the officer report entitled Reshaping Youth Services, considered at its meeting on 6 November 2013.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Mayor is recommended to receive the response of the Executive Directors for Children and Young People and Community Services to the comments and views of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee as set out in section three of the report and agree that the response be reported to both Select Committees.

## **3. Response of Executive Directors of Children and Young People and Community Services to the Views of Children and Young People Select Committee and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee**

- 3.1 On 6 November 2013, the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee considered a report entitled Reshaping Youth Services. The issues discussed in relation to this report are set out below followed by the response of the Executive Directors for Children and Young People and Community Services to each of the issues raised.
- 3.2 *The Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee should scrutinise the next report on Reshaping Youth Services prior to it being received at Mayor and Cabinet in February 2014.*

### **Response**

The report on Commissioned Youth Provision will be presented at the joint meeting of the Children and Young People and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committees on 3 February 2014 prior to it being received by the Mayor and Cabinet on 12 February 2014.

3.3 *Further to point 3.3 in the referral agreed by the Committees at the 13 February 2013 meeting and responded to by the Mayor and Cabinet on 22 May 2013, concerning improved information management, mapping and monitoring, the Committees request that:*

- *the report to Mayor and Cabinet in February 2014 include mapping information showing both the geographical spread and types of youth provision.*
- *monitoring of the re-engagement of young people with replacement and newly commissioned services in the Oakridge area be carried out and reported to Mayor and Cabinet in February 2014*
- *ongoing monitoring of young people's engagement with newly commissioned youth services should take place*

### **Response**

The Commissioned Youth Provision report going to the Mayor and Cabinet on 12 February 2014 will include mapping information, showing both the geographical spread and types of youth provision currently in operation and proposed for funding.

Officers have been contacting young people who were previously accessing Oakridge and Grove Park Youth Centres to establish whether they are now accessing alternative youth provision. Some of these young people are accessing alternative youth activities, and some have signed up for information on wider youth provision in the borough. However, many of the young people's contact details have changed which meant that officers could not get hold of them. Furthermore, of those who were contacted, many, including several parents, were reluctant to share the requested information with officers. This made tracking young people's engagement in other services very difficult. Officers will report on known numbers of young people accessing alternative provision in the Mayor and Cabinet report in February 2014. The Youth Service will continue to ensure widespread and targeted publicity of youth provision moving forward.

Once newly commissioned services are in place, providers will be required to monitor and report on numbers of young people accessing their services, along with other output and outcome data on young people. The frequency of monitoring and reporting will depend on the type and duration of the services being delivered but performance monitoring meetings with the Council will take place at least once a quarter as part of standard performance monitoring of commissioned provision.

3.4 *Analysis of the range of commissioning applications in terms of location, type of provision and type of organisation should be provided as part of the report to Mayor and Cabinet in February 2014.*

### **Response**

The Commissioned Youth Provision report will include analysis of the range of commissioning applications in terms of location, type of provision and type of organisation.

3.5 *The Committees endorse the approach taken by officers to avoid duplication between main grants and commissioned youth services. However, a clear timetable*

*setting out the interaction between the main grants funding programme and the youth services commissioning process should be provided.*

See below for a timetable setting out the interaction between the main grants programme and the youth service commissioning process which demonstrates synergy between the two. In addition to this, we will repeat and improve on the measures we undertook this year in the Commissioned Youth Provision process to avoid duplication with the main grants process, such as not requiring applicants to submit paperwork they may have submitted previously for main grants and working closely with Community Service colleagues to agree funding proposals which do not duplicate provision. For providers funded by both the Youth Service and the main grants programme, where possible and appropriate we will align performance monitoring requirements, including documentation and contract monitoring meetings, to avoid unnecessary duplication for these providers.

### **Timetable for main grants programme and Commissioned Youth Provision**

| <b>Main grants programme</b>                         |                              | <b>Commissioned Youth Provision</b>                      |                         |
|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Consultation on grant priorities                     | June – August 2014           |  |                         |
| Mayor and Cabinet paper on proposed grant priorities | September/ October 2014      | Reviewing 2014/15 contracts                              | September/ October 2014 |
| Applications period (8 weeks)                        | October – November 2014      | Application period for remaining funds                   | October - November 2014 |
| Assessing applications                               | December 2014                | Assessing applications                                   | November/ December 2014 |
| Mayor and Cabinet approval                           | February 2015                | Mayor and Cabinet approval of new and extended contracts | January/ February 2015  |
| New awards commence                                  | From April 2015 <sup>1</sup> | New and extended contracts commence                      | April 2015              |

3.6 *The Committees support the proposed evaluation of the application process for providing commissioned youth services.*

#### **Response**

In order to develop and improve the Commissioned Youth Provision process in future, officers have been evaluating the process throughout and will share the final evaluation and lessons learnt amongst those who will be involved in subsequent years. This includes young people’s involvement in the process, with feedback obtained from young people on the process and what they would change, if anything, for next year. Any recommended changes will be incorporated into the process for 2015/16 to support continuous improvement.

3.7 *The Committees are concerned about the ability of smaller community and voluntary organisations to understand and agree to complex contracts. The Committees believe that the complexity and fairness of contracts, with organisations*

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<sup>1</sup> In line with the Compact, we will seek to provide 3 months notice of changes to grant aid and interim funding arrangements may therefore be made for some groups.

*providing commissioned youth services, should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate and manageable for all organisations.*

### **Response**

Officers are conscious of the need for a simple, user friendly contract for commissioned youth provision which avoids any unnecessary legalistic drafting. The contract included in the application pack was a draft version; a new, streamlined contract will be developed by the legal team in consultation with youth service officers and commissioners for successful providers. To ensure fairness, this will be a generic contract for all providers. However, although the contract will be streamlined, in order to protect the Council, the provider and service users it will need to include certain provisions such as those covering insurance, staffing, DBS checks, accountability for funds, prompt payment, right of termination, monitoring and audit requirements. These provisions will be explained in user friendly language to ensure that the contract is manageable and appropriate for smaller and voluntary organisations and that they are able to understand and agree to the contract.

- 3.8 *Further to point 3.9 in the referral agreed by the Committees at the 13 February 2013 meeting, and responded to by the Mayor and Cabinet on 22 May 2013, the Committees urgently request that arrangements are made to ensure youth service provision is available in the Downham and Grove Park areas (particularly services once provided by the Oakridge Youth Centre) which suits the needs of the community. In addition, given the urgency of the situation, the Committees request that a clear timescale of when a more permanent solution for the Oakridge Youth Centre can be put in place is provided within 6 weeks of the date the Mayor considers this referral. The Committees call upon the Cabinet Member for Youth Services to lead this recommendation forward at Mayor and Cabinet.*

### **Response**

Officers are aware of the particular need for sufficient youth provision in the Downham and Grove Park areas which suit the requirements of these communities. This was made clear in the Area Profiles needs analysis which accompanied the Commissioned Youth Provision application pack in order to encourage applicants to respond accordingly. In terms of applications received, there is a fairly equal split across all four areas of the borough in relation to where projects would be delivered, with many projects delivered borough-wide and a small number delivered outside Lewisham. However young people from Area 3 (Catford South, Downham, Grove Park and Whitefoot) were targeted to access provision more than young people from any other area and the funding applied for to cover provision in Area 3 was greater than other areas. This pattern largely continues for projects proposed for funding. The projects proposed for Area 3 are varied and exciting, covering both universal and targeted provision and a range of activities, including generic youth centre provision similar to that previously offered by Oakridge Youth Centre. A full analysis of applications received and proposed for funding, including those for Area 3, will be provided in the Mayor and Cabinet report in February 2014.

To ensure that Oakridge Youth Centre is reopened for youth and community use as per the Mayor's decision in February 2013, officers have offered a lease to a local VCS organisation called REAP. This is based on a staggered introduction of full rental costs. REAP were the only respondents to a tender request in Autumn 2013.

They are being supported by officers and VAL to find partner organisations which will enable them to cover the full rent requested and make maximum use of the site. REAP will provide a range of youth provision which, alongside any provision delivered by partners, will be more than the Youth Service could have offered itself, at no cost to the Council.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se; but there may financial implications arising from carrying out the action proposed by the Committee.

#### **5. Equalities Implications**

- 5.1 Public bodies are legally required to consider the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (set out in the Equality Act 2010) and document their thinking as part of any decision-making process. The Act sets out that public bodies must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic; and
- Foster good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic.

- 5.2 An Equalities Analysis Assessment (EAA) has been undertaken on the Commissioned Youth Provision proposals to ensure that the funding recommendations comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The outcomes of the EAA will be presented as part of the Commissioned Youth Provision report going to the Mayor and Cabinet on 12 February 2014.

- 5.3 A full EAA was undertaken on the overarching Reshaping Youth Services proposals (13 February 2013). On balance, this EAA found that the potentially negative implications of the proposals from an equalities perspective, arising from a reduction in Lewisham staff and Lewisham-run youth centres, were outweighed by a number of positive implications including the following:

- More funding for high quality and varied youth provision for the PVI sector, to meet the diverse needs of Lewisham's young people including provision for all age groups;
- Greater focus on young people with additional needs (including those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training, disabled, in care, young parents etc and those with 'protected characteristics');
- Greater access for young people who need extra support to high quality youth provision, including those with SEN and disabilities;
- Greater focus on celebrating young people's achievements and promoting social cohesion and a positive image of young people;
- Greater involvement of young people in designing, developing and evaluating youth provision;
- A more modern, more efficient Youth Service, with a flatter staff structure, streamlined management and greater consistency across staff contracts which enables greater transparency and fairness across the workforce.

5.4 Overall, the impact of the proposals on equalities was deemed positive, with a concluding recommendation that the proposals should be progressed. However, an action plan has been instigated to ensure that any negative implications are responded to and minimised. The action plan is being monitored, updated and actioned by the Youth Service Transition Board. To see a copy of the full EAA, please contact Charly Williams, Commissioner, Children and Young People's Directorate ([charly.williams@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:charly.williams@lewisham.gov.uk)).

## 6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider the report and the proposed response from the relevant Executive Director; and report back to the Committee within two months (not including recess).

### Background papers

Reshaping Youth Services – Joint meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, 6 November 2013

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s25345/03UpdateOnReshapingTheYouthService06112013.pdf>

Comments of the joint meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on Reshaping Youth Services – Mayor and Cabinet, 20 February 2013

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s20608/Joint%20CYP%20SC%20and%20SSC%20SC%20Referral%20Youth%20services.pdf>

Response to the Comments of the Children Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on Reshaping Youth Services – Mayor and Cabinet 22 May 2013

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s22646/Response%20on%20Reshaping%20Youth%20Services%20to%20CYP%20SSC%20Select%20Committees.pdf>

Minutes of the Joint meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, 13 February 2013

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=332&MId=3199&Ver=4>

Reshaping Youth Services – Joint meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee and the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, 13 February 2013

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s25329/Reshaping%20Youth%20Services.pdf>

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Charly Williams, Commissioner, Children and Young People's Directorate ([charly.williams@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:charly.williams@lewisham.gov.uk)) or Mervyn Kaye, Youth Service Manager, Children and Young People's Directorate ([mervyn.kaye@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:mervyn.kaye@lewisham.gov.uk)).