

The Integrated Youth Strategy for Woking

Supporting young people to achieve their full potential through local partnership

1. Our Vision

- 1.1 The vision that drives the Integrated Youth Strategy for Woking is ***supporting young people to achieve their full potential through local partnership***. Establishing a joined up and integrated local Youth Offer, as part of wider early help and prevention arrangements, is an integral part of implementing the strategy. The Youth Offer will consist of a wide range of provision and support for young people across the whole borough. It will provide all young people with access to positive opportunities to engage in quality youth activity. It will also target young people that need additional support. Therefore, some services will be targeted in geographical areas that we know experience high levels of deprivation, because of the link between poverty and poor outcomes. Services will also be targeted at specific groups of young people, such as those in local authority care, those that have learning difficulties and disabilities and young carers, because research tells us that these factors can also result in poor outcomes.

2. Our Approach

- 2.1 Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council will jointly lead the strategy. The two Councils believe that closer alignment of resources and joining up services will result in a better range of local provision that is more effective in meeting young people's needs. The Integrated Youth Strategy for Woking will involve different organisations and agencies working together to plan, commission and deliver a coherent borough-wide Youth Offer for all young people that live in the borough. This integrated approach offers a number of key benefits;

- A joined up approach for commissioning and planning services for young people avoids duplication and double funding
- Involving partners and stakeholders in identifying young people's needs in Woking means that priorities are agreed at both strategic and operational levels
- Services are planned, commissioned and delivered to meet young people's needs, secure their interest and enthusiasm and support them to achieve their aspirations and ambitions.

- 2.2 A wide range of partners and providers (in addition to consultation with young people) have been involved in developing the strategy to date. The scope will be extended in future to secure the participation of a wider range of agencies and organisations that work with young people. For example; Schools, Public Health, Family Support, Leisure, Sport and Culture and young people's housing organisations. This will be achieved as part of a phased approach to widen the range of partners that sign up to and deliver elements of the strategy. The ongoing review process will assist in identifying how the strategy links with new and emerging county wide needs and objectives. The involvement of a wider range of partners in delivering the strategy will help to extend its scope, enhance the range of activities and increase its impact in supporting young people with complex or multiple needs.

3. Our Principles

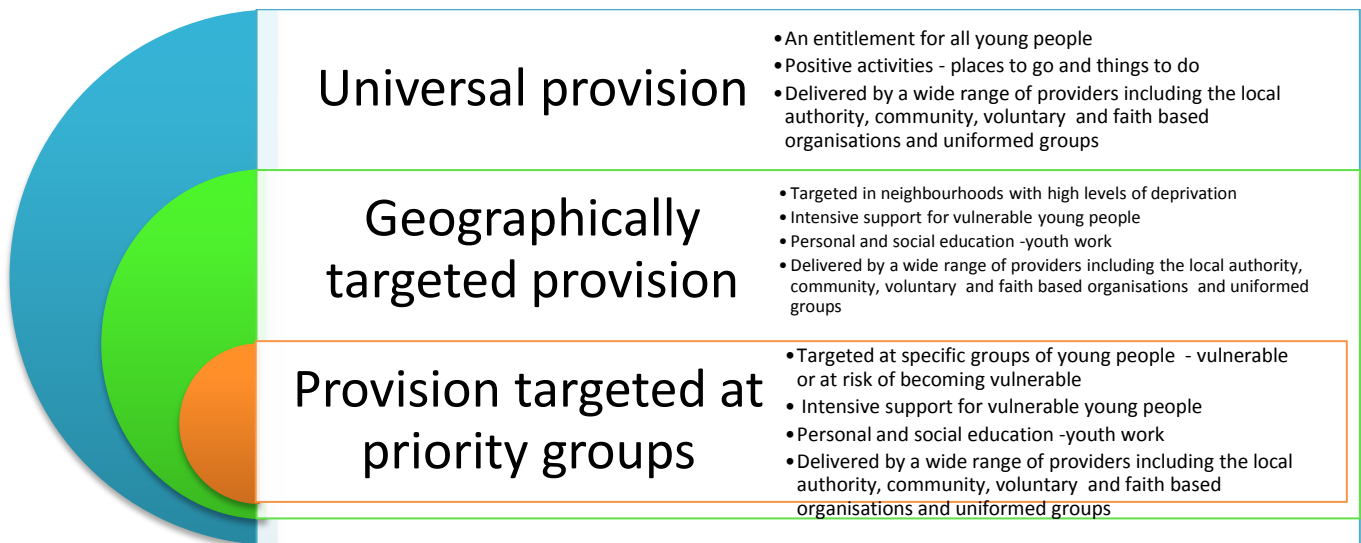
- 3.1 The following principles aim to ensure the strategy works in practice and to guide the way in which services are planned and delivered.

- **Partnership** – partner agencies working together within their agreed roles and responsibilities for the benefit of young people
- **Involving young people** - in designing, commissioning, planning and delivering the Youth Offer
- **Educational** – opportunities for young people’s personal and social development and the acquisition valuable life skills through engaging in challenging and rewarding activities
- **Early intervention and prevention** – engaging young people as early as possible to remove the barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential
- **Commissioning solutions locally** to meet agreed local needs and priorities
- **Co-production** – all services being co-produced with young people, their families, communities and professionals
- **Equality and Diversity** – all partners promoting equality and valuing the diversity of culture, heritage and backgrounds that exist in Woking

4. Our Woking Youth Offer Priorities

- 4.1 Our key priorities have been identified through reviewing data and information, drawing on the experience of practitioners and consulting young people. They address existing and emerging patterns of need across the borough and will guide commissioning and planning over the next five years. Each priority aligns with an outcome in Surrey Young People’s Outcomes Framework. Monitoring, review and evaluation of the services funded or provided directly by Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council, feedback from young people and practitioners and ongoing needs assessment will ensure that changing patterns of need are identified and addressed during the life of this strategy.
- 4.2 An Action Plan addressing each of the identified priorities as outlined below is attached as an appendix (appendix C) and highlights the areas of work that jointly will be delivered over the life of the Plan. The Action Plan will be subject to regular review. The priorities are:
- **Priority 1: Improving young people’s emotional wellbeing and mental health**
 - **Priority 2: Reducing risky behaviour – substance misuse, smoking, anti-social behaviour and improving sexual health**
 - **Priority 3: Meeting the needs of young people that require additional support in their transition from adolescence to adulthood**
 - **Priority 4: Improving young people’s experience of the local transport system – cost and safety**
 - **Priority 5: Ensuring that facilities are fit for purpose and accessible to young people**
 - **Priority 6: Promoting the Youth Offer**

5. The Woking Youth Offer



5.1 The ambition is for all provision that makes up the Woking Youth Offer to have the following characteristics:

- **Young people at the heart** of planning, commissioning, delivery and evaluation
- Providing opportunities for **fun and enjoyment**
- Enabling young people to **grow, thrive and develop**
- **Meeting young people's needs**, engaging their interest and enthusiasm
- Available **when and where young people want and need it**

6. Our Governance – Supporting achieving the vision and meeting the strategy priorities

6.1 The strategy is overseen, at a strategic level, by the Woking Joint Committee made up of Elected Members from the Borough and County Councils. A Youth Task Group, also made up of Elected Members from both Councils and supported by a team of officers, advises the Joint Committee on commissioning priorities for early help including youth work, individual support and crime prevention. The Joint Officer Group will lead on bringing stakeholders, including young people, together to develop the Youth Offer further.

6.2 The Youth Task Group will use this strategy and the associated priorities to guide its commissioning activities over the next five years. The Joint Officer Group will lead the development of annual action plans that ensure priorities are addressed through the activities of both councils. Performance against the action plans will be reviewed and reported to the Youth Task Group on a regular basis. Reports to the Woking Joint Committee will be provided in accordance with existing arrangements for performance review and reporting. This will ensure that youth services that are directly delivered or funded by both councils are on track and make a measurable impact on improving outcomes for young people in Woking.

End.

Appendix A.

Background Data:

- There are around 10,900 young people aged 10 to 19-years old living in Woking. Of these, 49% are young women and 51% are young men
- Around 20% of young people classify themselves as being part of a Black or Minority Ethnic group (BME). The largest BME community in Woking originates from Pakistan
- 12% of children and young people aged 0-19 years old live in poverty. Maybury and Sheerwater, Old Woking, Kingfield and Westfield and Goldsworth East have the highest proportions of children and young people growing up in poverty
- Maybury and Sheerwater wards include four of the most deprived neighbourhoods (SOAs) in the county.
- 51% of young people who have been identified as being at risk of being NEET when they leave school live in areas in Woking that experience high levels of income deprivation affecting children.
- Around 5% of young people have a special educational need or require additional support in school
- 2.7% of children and young people aged 16 or under are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance
- 50 young people aged 13 to 17 were supported by a Child Protection Plan between September 2013 and August 2014
- 56 young people aged 13 to 19 had periods when they were looked after by the local authority between September 2013 and August 2014
- Over the next five years it is estimated that the number of young people aged between 13 and 19 years will rise by around 6.6%
- The majority of young people living in the borough make positive transitions from adolescence into adulthood; doing well at school and college, participating in post-16 education and training and going on to employment or higher education. In 2014 only 1.5% of 16 to 18 year olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET) - one of the lowest rates in the country
- Around 5% of young people, for a variety of reasons, need additional support as they grow up. Research indicates that factors such as poverty, have a learning difficulty or physical disability and speaking English as an additional language can have a negative impact on young people's life chances
- Fewer young people are becoming involved in crime – there were only 13 first time entrants into the Youth Justice system in 2014 compared with 30 in 2012.
- More young people are engaging in activities, such as youth work, that promote their personal development. County-wide data indicates that engaging in centre based youth work and activities funded through the Local Prevention Framework has a positive impact on school attendance and reducing fixed term exclusions
- More young people are making a positive contribution to their communities. Woking Youth Council is a group of young people that reflects the diverse culture of the borough. The Youth Council participates in making decisions about services and facilities for young people to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet the needs of all young people in the borough
- Increasing numbers of young people are involved in co-production through participating in youth centre steering groups and becoming volunteers. These young people gain valuable skills which assist them to succeed in other areas of their lives
- Young people are routinely involved in making decisions about their services as part of both the county and borough commissioning and planning processes.

Appendix B:

Research and consultation findings about young people's needs that has informed our priorities.

Priority 1: Improving young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health

- 1.1 Increasing numbers of young people are presenting with mental health and emotional difficulties; an estimated 11% of 5-15 year olds living in Maybury and Sheerwater have a mental health disorder. National research indicates that the severity and duration of mental health problems can be reduced when young people have quick access to effective help and support.
- 1.2 Working practitioners report that more young people are presenting with complex mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. Research on the impact of poor emotional well being and mental health suggests that young people can develop protective factors during adolescence that reduce the risk and severity of emotional and behavioural disorders. These protective factors include a positive attachment to school, family and community; positive peer influence; opportunities to succeed; problem solving skills; and positive 'social capital' indicators, for example, friends, support networks, valued social roles and positive views on their neighbourhoods.

Priority 2: Reducing risky behaviour – substance misuse, smoking, anti-social behaviour and improving sexual health

- 2.1 Maybury and Sheerwater experience the highest levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour. Working Anti-social Behaviour Team recognises that public perception of young people's involvement in anti-social behaviour can be much worse than the reality. Never-the-less, being involved in anti-social behaviour puts young people at risk of entering the Youth Justice System which, in turn, has a negative impact on their chances of participating fully in society.
- 2.2 While there is limited data on the prevalence of substance misuse in Woking, practitioners say that more young people are using legal highs and cannabis. National research indicates that most young people do not use illicit drugs or binge drink, and among those who do only a minority will develop serious problems. Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2014 asserts that substance misuse in young people is associated with behavioural, physical and mental health problems. The majority of young people accessing specialist treatment services in Surrey are Alcohol and Cannabis users. However, smoking also has negative effects on long term health; a recent survey into the smoking habits amongst young people in Surrey showed that although most children had not tried smoking in year 7, by year 13 nearly 80% had tried smoking at least once with nearly 30% classed as a regular smoker.
- 2.3 The under-18 conception rate for Woking is 23 per 1,000 young women. This is lower than the average for England (40 per 1,000) but slightly higher than the average for Surrey (22 per 1,000). In 2011 the five wards with the highest rates of under-18 conceptions were:
 - Kingfield & Westfield
 - Maybury and Sheerwater
 - Old Woking
 - Goldsworth West
 - Hermitage & Knaphill South

- 2.4 National research indicates that Sexually Transmitted Infections are more common among young people than any other group. Two-thirds of cases of Chlamydia are among young men and women aged 16-24 years. However, young people are the group least likely to access sexual health advice and treatment in traditional clinical settings. This indicates a need to provide sexual health services for young people in community settings.
- 2.5 The young people consulted about the strategy say that they want to know the truth about issues such as sex and relationships and the risks and harms of misusing substances. They want to learn about these things in ways that are interesting and to have access to information about where to go for services and support in a variety of formats.

Priority 3: Meeting the needs of young people that require additional support in their transition from adolescence to adulthood

- 3.1 Most young people in Woking make a positive transition through adolescence into adulthood. However, a few young people need additional support to help them to participate in society. Practitioners identified the need to support young people with low level underlying issues that can escalate and prevent them from achieving their full potential. Young people consulted as part of the development of this strategy identified the barriers that some young people face and said that those who need additional support should have good access to it. Both groups are in favour of targeting provision in neighbourhoods that experience high levels of need.
- 3.2 There are a variety of factors that make a negative impact on young people's life chances. In Woking, research indicates that young people who grow up in poverty or in areas with high levels of need are more likely to require additional support. Data also indicates that factors such as speaking English as an additional language, having a learning disability or being a young carer can also affect young people's outcomes as they grow up. Other factors that make a negative impact on positive transitions through adolescence to adulthood include being looked after by the local authority, having a Gypsy, Roma Traveller heritage or facing the barriers experienced by young people who are Gay, Lesbian, bi-sexual or transgendered. Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework identifies groups of young people that need targeted support to assist their transition into adulthood because of the barriers they face.
- 3.3 These include young people who:
- Have special educational needs
 - Are looked after or are care leavers
 - Are on Child Protection Plans
 - Are identified as being at risk of becoming NEET
 - Are young parents
 - Have caring responsibilities
 - Are from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities
 - Have offended
 - Are homeless
 - Have protected characteristics including sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief where this results in them facing barriers to participation in society

Priority 4: Improving young people's experience of the local transport system – cost and safety

- 4.1 Consultation with young people in Woking and across the county has identified the availability, cost, and feeling safe when using public transport as an issue; The One in Ten Needs Assessment says that, *“Time and again young people tell us that access to affordable transport is a key barrier to participation. Where it's not available it can prevent young people from engaging in positive activities and accessing education, employment or training”*.
- 4.2 Those young people that were consulted as part of the development of this strategy said that the cost of public transport in and around Woking is too high, that it is unreliable and does not operate frequently enough. A few young people say that the cost of peak time travel in the morning is affecting their ability to arrive at school or college on time.
- 4.3 Young people also raised the importance of being and feeling safe when using public transport. This issue was particularly important for young people who are LGBT who say that they regularly experience abuse when walking around the town or using public transport.

Priority 5: Ensuring that facilities are fit for purpose and accessible to young people

- 5.1 The young people that engaged in the consultation for the Strategy say they want more things to do in their leisure time. This is closely connected to supporting young people to make informed decisions about the use of their free time; one of the outcomes in the Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework. Across Woking there are a multitude of facilities and assets provided by a range of statutory, voluntary and faith based groups where activity for young people takes place. In some cases the facilities are seen, predominately, as being for young people, for example, youth centres, skate parks, climbing boulders and play areas. However, in many cases, they are shared spaces, such as community centres, where youth activities take place at certain times. In addition, there is a wealth of assets, which are not currently accessible for use by young people, which could be made available through negotiation with management committees or owners.
- 5.2 Irrespective of the type of asset, there are costs associated with maintaining these facilities. Many of our venues are ageing-stock which will, in due course, require significant investment. The development of the Integrated Youth Strategy provides an opportunity to jointly review existing provision, involving young people in assessing whether buildings and other assets are in the right place and provide access to appropriate facilities and activities. This, in turn, will help to gauge the level of need and support for developing new facilities, such as a cultural and music venue, a youth café or an indoor skate park.

Priority 6: Promoting the Youth Offer

- 6.1 In 2012, 16.7% of Woking children in year six were classified as obese and 15.1% were classified as being overweight. This means that nearly one in three children and young people in Woking are obese or overweight. The area also has one of the highest rates of increase in the proportion of children that are overweight or obese between reception and year six.
- 6.2 Promoting the Youth Offer effectively is important in ensuring that young people and practitioners know what is available in local areas. It is closely linked to supporting

young people to make informed decisions about the use of their free time; one of the outcomes in Surrey Young People's Outcomes Framework. The young people consulted as part of the development of this strategy say they want to know about all the activities that are available. Practitioners say that sharing information about services and resources will help them to promote the Youth Offer, make effective referrals, signpost and improve collaborative working. Volunteers, in particular want to know more about services for young people across the borough.

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References

- Audit of childcare and early education provision – children centre areas – Surrey County Council 2012
- One In Ten 2014 – Surrey County Council 2014
- Surrey Young People's Outcome Framework 2014
- Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Families in Poverty Needs Assessment – Surrey County Council 2011
- Woking Health Profile 2014