

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****DATE: 26 NOVEMBER 2019****REPORT OF: MRS MARY LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES****LEAD OFFICER: DAVID HILL. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFE-LONG LEARNING****SUBJECT: FAMILY RESILIENCE – UNIVERSAL YOUTH OFFER****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council currently provides open access universal youth work that takes place in youth centres across the county. The youth centres are often underutilised and are not fulfilling their potential for the benefit of young people.

There is no statutory duty for Surrey County Council to provide open access universal youth work and the majority of universal youth work in Surrey is already delivered by the voluntary, community and faith sector.

Whilst there is no statutory duty, the youth centres themselves are a valued community asset and can play a larger role in achieving the Community Vision for 2030 that includes community participation as one of the priorities. Our aim is to increase the availability of the existing youth centres for the use of the voluntary, community and faith sector.

We therefore intend to consult on whether Surrey County Council delivers universal open access youth work and to enable the voluntary, community and faith sector to use the youth centres at little or no cost.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Cabinet agrees to undertake public consultation on whether Surrey County Council enables the voluntary community and faith sector to use the youth centres for the benefit of young people at little or no cost.
2. Cabinet agrees to consult on whether Surrey County Council delivers universal open access youth work.
3. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Executive Director Children, Lifelong Learning and Culture to work with Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Families to agree and implement the local solutions following the conclusion of the consultation.

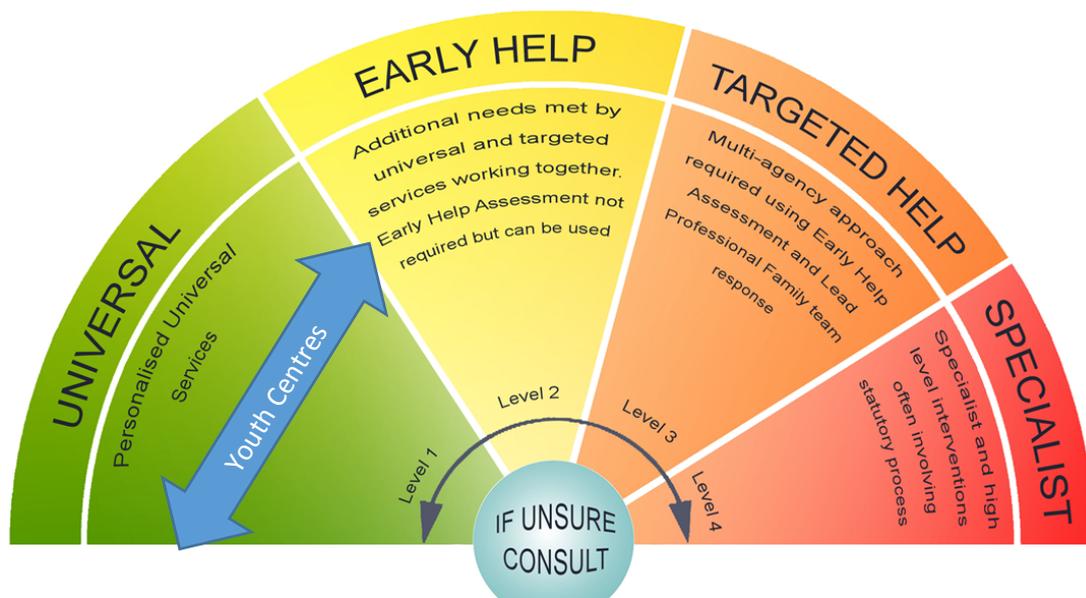
**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Transforming the existing universal youth work model and improving the access to youth centres requires formal consultation. The options and solutions for each youth centre will

need to be considered at a local level as part of the local engagement during the consultation.

**DETAILS:**

1. The reduction in open access youth provision has been a national trend in the last decade with many local authorities significantly reducing or stopping completely the delivery of universal youth work. There is no statutory duty for Surrey County Council to deliver universal youth work.
2. The restructure of the Children and Family Service has strengthened the capacity and capability to respond to young people who need additional support with the creation of Targeted Youth Support and the Safeguarding Adolescence Teams. The new Children's Single Point Access has also improved the pathways to this support. A description of the full youth offer is set out in Appendix A.



3. The restructure of the Children and Family Service has not however remodelled the universal open access youth work that is currently delivered across the county.
4. This report refers to universal open access youth work as defined by the Safeguarding Partnership Levels of Need. Universal open access youth work takes place in youth centres, often using activities such as sport, music and art as a way to engage young people. The primary focus is the social and emotional development of young people and is open to all young people for little or no cost.
5. There are approximately 35 locations that are used or have been used to deliver open access youth work. Most of the buildings are owned by the county council with others leased from District and Borough Councils or private landlords. The annual running costs associated with the buildings is circa £975k. The majority of buildings are under-utilised.

6. The universal youth work staffing budget is £657k and is made of up of approximately 100 staff but only 19.6 full time equivalents as the majority of staff have contracts for only a few hours a week
7. We are proposing that Surrey County Council ceases the delivery of Universal Youth Work and to enable the voluntary, community and faith sector to use the existing youth centres to provide services for young people. The intention is to maximise the potential of the existing youth centres whilst recognising this needs to be achieved within the available existing resources.
8. The contribution of Surrey County Council needs to add value to the voluntary, community and faith sector, working alongside organisations such Surrey Youth Focus, YMCA Easy Surrey, Eikon and Surrey Clubs for Young People. These, and other organisations, already provide interventions and support to deliver a comprehensive universal youth offer across Surrey and they have significant experience, skills and resources to do so.
9. We know one of the main barriers for the voluntary, community and faith sector is access to buildings, running costs and short term funding/lease arrangements. Whilst bigger organisations are willing and able to take on the full running costs of buildings smaller, emerging community based groups may initially find this difficult.
10. The existing youth centres will be reviewed at a local level with key stakeholders with the intention of each centre being available for use by the voluntary, community and faith sector at little or no cost.
11. Only if there is no local demand for the centre and following the conclusion of the consultation would any further considerations for the buildings' future use be recommended. There may also be scope for relocating provision to more suitable locations which can also be considered at a local level. Where there are opportunities for colocation of other services this will also be considered.
12. There is no one single solution for each existing youth centre in Surrey and each centre will need to be looked individually at a local level with key stakeholders to agree future delivery options. These could include:
  - Supporting the creation of management committees and providing them with a lease for the building with an agreed set of outcomes.
  - Providing leases to already established organisations with an agreed set of outcomes.
  - Agreeing what type of use and lease arrangement could be for little or no cost to the provider.
  - Relocating provision to an alternative site if the building is not fit for purpose or in the wrong location.
  - Providing short term pump prime grant funding for organisations that need help to get established.
  - Enabling mixed use of the building with other SCC services and partners.
13. Our resources and expertise are best utilised by targeting services at young people most in need but we also have a key role to play to enable and support local delivery

of universal youth work. This can be achieved by retaining a small team to support sustainable provision. The role will liaise with all stakeholders to:

- Have oversight of delivery across the county, and to understand local needs
- Maximise the use of buildings, enabling multi-users
- Understanding & unblocking the barriers to delivery including cost
- Supporting quality delivery and working with local providers according to their needs

#### **CONSULTATION:**

14. The formal consultation will commence 16 December 2019 and will remain open until the end of April 2020, during which time we will undertake local engagement regarding each existing centre to identify how we can support the voluntary, community and faith sector to use the centre.
15. The local engagement will include seeking the views of young people, communities, district and borough councils, local and joint committees, voluntary, community faith organisations and other key stakeholders.
16. The consultation will include the opportunity for residents and voluntary, community and faith organisations to register their interest to use of the youth centres for the benefit of young people and the community.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

17. The table below sets out the associated risks during the consultation period.

<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Mitigation Activity</b>
Existing buildings remain underutilised during the consultation	Short term lease/rental/Service Level Agreements will be used to enable use by the voluntary, community and faith sector pending the consultation outcome.
Uncertainty for existing organisations using the youth centres	No changes will be made to existing arrangements during the consultation period. Existing users will be included as stakeholders in the local engagement

#### **FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

18. The building and workforce costs will be remodelled and contained within the existing budgets of £975k and £657k respectively

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTARY**

19. Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium term financial outlook is uncertain as it is heavily dependent on decisions made by Central Government. With no clarity on these beyond 2020/21, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade.

This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the proposal to consult on the future delivery of universal youth services.

20. Whilst the initial proposals do not result in any reductions to the current level of expenditure, the outcome of the consultation will be factored into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER

21. As set out in the body of the report, the County Council does not have a statutory duty to provide universal access to a youth service. The Council has a duty under the Education Acts which requires it to “secure, so far as reasonably practicable, provision of educational and recreational leisure time activities for young people”.
22. In carrying out this duty, the Council must ensure that young people are consulted and have a say in the local offer. This is often referred to as the “youth service duty” which will be met in the proposed consultation programme set out in the report.

#### EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

23. The Equalities and Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the consultation and engagement and used to inform any future recommendations and decisions.

#### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

24. The consultation will commence 16 December 2019.
25. Engagement events will take place in each district and borough during the consultation with dates published on the Surrey County Council Have Your Say website.
26. The engagement events will be scheduled to take place in each district and borough as set out below.

District and Borough	Local engagement
Mole Valley Reigate and Banstead Tandridge	January 2020
Spelthorne Epsom and Ewell Elmbridge	February 2020
Runnymede Surrey Heath Woking	March 2020
Waverley Guildford	April 2020

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**Contact Officer:**

Nigel Denning, Early Help Transformation Lead

**Annexes:**

The Surrey County Council Youth Offer.