

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PARTICPATION CHRIS MILLIS

16th July 2015

SECTION B – MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

REVIEW OF YOUTH CLUB PROVISION

Purpose of Report

To inform members on the progress implementing the approved changes to the current allocation of youth clubs to enable continuity of the service within the context of current budget limitations.

Background

The Council required the Youth Service to make savings of £100k to its core budget during 2015/16. This is in addition to £42k already identified as part of the Forward Financial Plan. As part of the measures to enable the Youth Service to meet this requirement it was necessary to change the way it provided community based youth clubs. During the month of November 2014 the Service undertook a consultation exercise on the future of youth club provision.

The purpose of the consultation was to enable the Council to assess the potential future operation of all youth club provision. The consultation was designed to collect information and opinion on how best to maintain or improve provision for young people whilst also realising the increased efficiency and cost savings needed. Proposals to secure cost savings included:

- Reducing the annual number of weeks open from 30 to 28 weeks;
- Reducing staffing levels where clubs that are carrying vacancies but are able to adequately maintain provision with a smaller team;
- Reducing the number of nights open in clubs that open more than one night per week;
- Identifying alternative models of delivery including other sources of funding.

The option of closure was also a consideration.

Progress on implementing the agreed proposals

General proposal applicable to all clubs:

There has been no change to the number of weeks Youth Clubs operate during the year. They will continue to be provided 30 weeks annually.

Any reduction in the contracted hours of staff has been managed within the management of change processes and opportunities for redeployment were offered and processed to make up any losses to staff terms and conditions.

Youth Club Provision across Neath Port Talbot

Blaengwynfi:

Reduced from 2 nights per week to 1 night per week i.e. Blaengwynfi is now open on a Wednesday in line with the preferred night identified as part of the consultation process. Current staffing levels were retained.

Bryn:

The youth club continues to operate in Bryn Community Centre and the Youth Workers have now taken on the role of key holders to open and close the centre. The club currently has one vacancy which was not removed from the structure as proposed due to the Community Centre remaining open. All other staff were retained and the night remained a Friday as this was the preferred option. The proposed savings of £1,893 will now be realised through the savings reached whilst waiting for the 24 part time vacancies to be filled.

Bryncoch:

No change to Bryncoch. The club operates one evening per week, has minimum staffing levels and is open on the preferred evening i.e. Thursday. There is currently a vacancy for a "Worker in Charge" which was not taken up as a redeployment opportunity for staff in other clubs that were subject to reduced hours or redundancy. This post has been advertised via Prior Consideration and is currently advertised internally.

Cimla:

The clubs allocation was reduced from five to four with the vacancy for a "Deputy Worker in Charge" being removed from the structure. Cimla remains open one night a week on a Monday night which was the preferred option for this club.

Croeserw:

The clubs allocation was reduced from five staff to four with the vacancy for a “Deputy Worker in Charge” being removed from the structure. Two applications for voluntary redundancy were declined as both posts were offered as bumped redundancies and offered as redeployment opportunities for staff in other clubs that were subject to reduced hours or redundancy. There is currently one Activity Worker vacancy in Croeserw that has been advertised via Prior Consideration and is currently advertised internally. The club continues to open on a Monday night and one night per week. The option of Thursday was explored as this was the preferred night instead of Monday but clashed with other centre users.

Crynant:

The clubs allocation was reduced from eight to six staff this included the removal of a “Deputy Worker in Charge” post and an Activity Worker role. The Worker in Charge vacancy for Crynant was taken up as a redeployment opportunity. The club will remain open two nights per week on a Tuesday and Friday.

Cwmllynfell:

The clubs allocation was reduced from six staff to five with the “Deputy Worker in Charge” post being removed from a Wednesday night and an Activity Worker role removed from the Tuesday night. The club remains open two nights per week on a Tuesday and Wednesday.

Cymmer:

Cymmer Youth Club has been reduced from four nights to two nights per week. One of the nights is the preferred night of Friday and the other night was decided in consultation with staff, young people and took into consideration when other provision is available in the Afan Valley. The clubs allocation was reduced from seven staff to five with the “Deputy Worker in Charge” post being granted voluntary redundancy and removed from the structure and a vacant Activity Worker being removed.

Cymmer currently has a Worker in Charge vacancy that has arisen due to a resignation due to voluntary redundancy being declined and an Activity Worker vacancy that has been advertised via Prior Consideration and is currently advertised internally

Cymmer Comprehensive School is now charging rent to the Youth Service.

Glyncorrwg:

The youth club has now been relocated due to the closure of Glyncorrwg Community Centre. The club now operates in a privately run venue and the Youth & Community Worker has secured funding for one year’s rent from the Fire Service. The number of nights per week the club is open has been reduced from two nights to one. The club is currently open on a Tuesday based on the availability of the venue. One staff was approved VR with the Deputy Leader role being removed from the restructure and another VR request was declined with redeployment opportunities being offered and accepted in most cases. The reduction in hours was subject to management of change processes and opportunities for redeployment were offered to staff to make up the loss.

Glynneath:

The club has reduced its staffing allocation from seven to five with one application for VR being declined. There are currently two vacancies that have been advertised via Prior Consideration and are currently advertised internally. No other changes have been made the club remains open one night per week on a Thursday.

Hengwrt:

Hengwrt Youth Club was closed to help realise the savings needed. The venue that the club operated in was subject to closure as part of the council's plans for leisure centres and all of the staff opted for and were granted voluntary redundancy. One casual member of staff was declined VR and was offered redeployment.

Sandfields:

Staffing levels have been reduced from eight to seven and nights from four to three. There was minimum management of change; all of the staff affected opted for redeployment to another night in this youth club. There are currently two vacancies that have been advertised via Prior Consideration and are currently advertised internally. The Youth Club is due to be relocated into the Aberavon Leisure and Fitness Centre owing to the closure of its current venue at Seaway Parade.

Seven Sisters:

Seven Sisters Youth Club reduced its provision from two nights per week to one night with the Thursday night remaining which is the preferred night. Staffing levels were reduced from six to five by removing a vacant post from the structure. All the changes were subject to minimum management of change processes as club staff have already chosen to reduce the provision due to poor attendance by young people on a Tuesday night.

Taibach:

Taibach Youth Club reduced its provision from three nights to two nights per week. The post of Deputy Leader was removed from the structure and the post holder granted VR, the application for VR from the Worker in Charge was declined. No other changes were made and all vacancies were taking up as part of the redeployment process.

Ystalyfera:

This club is still currently closed but the Youth Service is seeking an alternative venue with the help of the local community. Staffing levels for the provision have been reduced from six staff to four and an allocation of rent has remained. Youth Service staff are visiting alternative venues and carrying out detached work in the area to consult with young people.

Further Review:

Elected Members have asked for a further review of youth club provision to take place during 2015/16 with a view of ensuring a more equitable spread of youth clubs across Neath Port Talbot. Youth Support Services are currently being mapped by the Youth Support Service Liaison Officer and this will be used to help inform a county wide mapping exercise. This has been built into the Youth & Community Worker work plan for 2015/16.

This will be completed by October and a report will be brought to the meeting of the Committee on the 22nd October 2015. The youth club provision is reviewed on an annual basis and could be subject to change due to variation in demand, budgetary constraints or any other relevant issues.

Ongoing Changes

In order to minimise the reduction in provision to young people, savings have been realised by reducing the cost of staff meetings. The Youth Clubs Pre-term Meetings are reduced from three hours to two hours, three times per annum. The Worker in Charge Meetings are reduced from six hours to three hours, three times per annum.

Current Recruitment:

At present the Youth Service are currently recruiting for:

4 x Worker in Charge posts

17 x Activity Leader posts

All of these posts were advertised via the Prior Consideration process to which we had one applicant and are now advertised internally. When the recruitment is completed all staff will receive clear contracts stating post title, location, designated night/nights and rates of pay.

Appendices:

None

List of Background Papers

None

Officer Contact

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