

Information/Discussion Paper

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 24th May 2011

Building resilience in providers of community-based youth work

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

1. Background

- 1.1** The unprecedented financial crisis has resulted in huge cuts in public expenditure. As part of its 2011-12 budget, Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has agreed to focus its resources on young people who are in greatest need and those at risk of not making a successful transition into adulthood. To achieve this, a complete redesign of Young People's services is proposed including the Connexions Service, Youth Service, Outdoor and Environmental Education, Youth Offending Service and Post-16 Service.
- 1.2** As part of the redesign, it is proposed that GCC will withdraw from direct provision of general services for young people. In Cheltenham, this will affect the following youth centres:
- Whaddon Youth Centre (which is owned and operated by GCC);
 - Oasis Youth Centre (which is owned and operated by GCC);
 - Springbank Resource Centre (which is managed by Hesters Way Neighbourhood Project);
 - Aggs Garden Pavilion (which is owned by Cheltenham Borough Council - CBC);
 - Brizen Youth Centre (which is leased to Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council and managed by the Brizen Management Committee);
 - Naunton Park Pavilion (which is owned by CBC and managed by a management committee);
 - Charlton Kings Youth Centre (which is owned by the trustees of Charlton Kings Youth & Community Centre).
- 1.3** The residual GCC funding is proposed to be targeted on prevention services aimed at young people in greatest need. GCC also propose to invest £300k in positive activities for young people, to be delivered by voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, £50k per district in 2011-12.
- 1.4** Given that the county's funding will go on one-off direct provision with VCS providers, the council is keen to build up their capacity so that they are better equipped to adapt to the financial challenges. It wishes to see a bottom-up community development approach to youth work that builds on existing community resources and expertise within the voluntary sector and bolsters this through the use of volunteers.

1.5 In its budget agreed on 11th February 2011, the Council therefore agreed to allocate a one-off sum of £50k from its local area agreement performance reward grant to support the sustainable development of additional capacity and expertise within VCS providers of community-based youth work.

2. The commissioning brief

2.1 The council adopted a commissioning approach to allocating the £50k. As part of this, the council worked with the Cheltenham Children and Young People's Partnership to define what we wanted to achieve with the funding and then undertake a process to identify a delivery partner(s) who could provide these at best value. As a result a commissioning brief was produced that set out the desired outputs and outcomes.

2.2 To progress the commissioning process, CBC advertised the brief widely and gave 8 weeks for interested parties the opportunity for to submit an expression of interest. The documents were also circulated to existing providers of community-based youth work and organisations that provide support for these organisations in order that they could set out their views on the proposed outcomes and the degree in which they met areas of need and gaps in existing support.

2.3 Four expressions of interest were received:

- Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action (GAVCA)
- Gloucestershire Enterprises Ltd
- County Community Projects
- Third Sector Services

2.4 Comments on the brief were received from the Brizen Young People's Centre Management Committee.

2.5 The expressions of interest and comments were assessed on Monday 9th May by a sub-group from Social and Community O+S Committee. The expressions of interest were also reviewed on Friday 13th May by a group comprising the Chair of the Cheltenham Children and Young People's Partnership and the Cabinet Member Housing and Safety and a verbal update of the meeting will be given at the Cabinet meeting.

3. Assessment of the expressions of interest

3.1 The assessment of the expressions of interest is set out in appendix A. All four proposals have strengths as well as areas where we would like more information. There are also areas where the individual proposals complement each other and where we would like to encourage the organisations to work together to pool expertise and capacity.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The four organisations will now be asked to submit a detailed proposal that will set out more detail with regard to the following issues:
- How will they spend the money
 - How will this meet the defined outcomes
 - How will VCS providers access the service
 - How will the proposal support equal access across the borough.
- 4.2 We are also keen that the organisations consider how they can best work together to pool expertise and capacity.
- 4.3 Submissions will be required by Friday 24th June 2011. In early July, those organisations submitting a proposal will be asked to attend an question and answer session with elected members from the Social and Community O+S Committee sub-group and the Chair of the Cheltenham Children and Young People's Partnership. This will enable the Cabinet Member Housing and Safety to make a decision and report this to Cabinet on 26 July 2011.

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Appendices	A – assessment of expressions of interest
Background information	