



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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Date: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019

To the Chair and Members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### YOUTH UPDATE

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Nuala Fennelly Children, Young People and Schools	All	Yes/No

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on current youth provision across the borough, EXPECT Youth and the new Youth Strategy
2. The Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on local authorities to secure "sufficient activities" for 13 -19 year olds and young people under 24 with SEND. Over the last 3 years in Doncaster we have restructured how we deliver on this through a partnership model, including the commissioning of EXPECT Youth. Through this approach, EXPECT Youth are the convenor of universal youth activity enabling community capacity building and innovation. Whilst DMBC retain the responsibility for targeted activity including for children and young people with SEND and LGBTQ young people.
3. The report will set out the need for a co-ordinated Youth Strategy, detailing our ambition to deliver beyond our statutory duty to secure sufficient positive activities; but to expand the diverse range of opportunities for young people, supporting their social and personal development, raising aspiration and building resilience. All of which is set in the context of our ambition to be the most child friendly borough in the country.
4. In the current Children and Young People's Plan, we set out our ambition to be the most child friendly borough in the country, the framework for this is detailed in the report and the Youth Strategy is a key element of delivering on this ambition.
5. In addition, it supplies an update on EXPECT Youth, including:
  - The change of governance to EXPECT through its newly assigned charity status.
  - The performance indicators underpinning the current grant agreement with EXPECT Youth, including the need to increase community capacity and the

- requirement to map and monitor the number of positive engagements with children and young people.
- The future role of EXPECT Youth as the convenor and co-ordinator of universal youth provision as detailed in the Youth Strategy.

## **EXEMPT REPORT**

6. There is no exempt information contained in the report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7. To consider and comment on the principles of the Youth Strategy, including the proposals to extend universal youth provision offered across the borough, in terms of the diversity and reach. Ensuring children and young people are supported in their social and personal development, building their resilience and raising aspiration. Giving all children and young people across the borough the opportunity to widen their experiences and access a range of diverse and innovative activities.

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

8. The Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on local authorities to secure "sufficient activities" for 13 -19 year olds and young people under 24 with SEND. Through a partnership model, which includes EXPECT Youth and voluntary and community groups we fulfil this duty. With Doncaster Council holding the responsibility for targeted youth support for children and young people with SEND and LGBTQ young people.
9. Through this approach, and delivery against a co-ordinated Youth Strategy we will continue to strengthen our youth offer for children and young people in Doncaster that delivers:
  - A co-ordinated approach to the delivery of a youth provision across the borough.
  - Accessible information in the form of a 'What's going on' for young people.
  - New initiatives and innovation programmes for young people in response to what they have told us.
  - A rich and diverse youth offer for young people ranging from social engagement to social enterprise.
  - A system that can mobilise into areas of need and respond to the views of children and young people.
  - Where needed a targeted programme of activity for some of most vulnerable children and young people.
10. In addition, the Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2020 set out our ambition to become the most child friendly borough. The Youth Strategy will support the delivery of this ambition.

## **BACKGROUND**

11. Over recent years, we have seen a reduction in the number of council run youth services, however the decision in 2016 to develop a youth alliance, now named EXPECT Youth, to be the new delivery model for universal youth services has meant that in Doncaster we have seen an increase in youth activities. This is due to

considerable work with the voluntary and community sector to ensure there is capacity across the whole of the system and volunteers and groups feel supported and well trained. In addition, Doncaster Council continues to hold responsibility for targeted youth support for children and young people with SEND and LGBTQ young people.

12. Although there has been success through the new delivery model, it has been recognised that there has been no one strategy driving this work forward or a framework to ensure the partnership are working to shared priorities and aims.
13. The Doncaster Youth Strategy will serve as the strategic driver for all youth policy and will ensure that the youth offer for all young people in Doncaster is robust, consistent and meets the needs of all our young people.
14. In order to ensure that the strategy does what we need it to do we need to understand the national and local strategic framework surrounding youth services.
15. As detailed above the Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on local authorities to secure sufficient activities for young people. The act however does not state how this should be delivered.
16. In addition, while there is no government strategy or over-arching policy dedicated to young people, over recent years there has been a move to address this. The 2018 Civil Society Strategy included 'opportunities for young people' as one of three 'missions' to enable a lifetime of contribution by citizens. This focuses on empowering young people to take part in and influence decision-making and to become socially responsible, with an additional focus on supporting disadvantaged young people to take advantage of the opportunities available to them. The strategy also commits the Government to a review of the statutory guidance on the youth services duty, which should be published later this year.
17. Added to this, last year saw the publication of the All Party Parliamentary Group Youth Work Enquiry. This set out a number of recommendations in relation to the delivery of youth services including; the need for the government to introduce a clear statutory duty and guidance that defines a minimum and protected level of youth service and the need to develop a workforce strategy for youth workers, trainees and volunteers.
18. There are also a number of key strategies, locally, that set the landscape for an overarching Youth Strategy, such as Doncaster Growing Together, the Education and Skills Framework 2030 and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Trailblazer. The crucial local policy driver for the strategy is the current Children and Young People's Plan. In this, we set out our ambition to be the most child friendly borough in the country. This ambition will be delivered against a framework of eight priorities areas.

## **1. Connecting Young People & Doncaster**

A child friendly borough ensures that children and young people have access to the information that they need to make informed decisions and access the services and opportunities available within the borough

## **2. Building an Inclusive Doncaster**

A child friendly borough is thoroughly inclusive and takes steps to ensure that all children and young people feel like welcome and active members of their

communities with equal access to opportunities and services, particularly disadvantaged young people

### **3. Creating a Happy & Healthy Doncaster**

A child friendly borough is one that promotes and facilitates the maintenance of good physical and mental wellbeing and ensures that young people are able to access services supporting those aims effectively

### **4. Providing opportunities for participation & engagement**

A child friendly borough ensures that children and young people have the opportunity to access activities and events across the spectrum of sports, arts and community groups regardless of their location

### **5. Ensuring a Community-Focused Doncaster**

A child friendly borough provides as many services as possible within the community and empowers these communities and the children and young people within them to have an active role in shaping their services and their future. Services will also ensure young people are signposted to other activity that may be delivered across the borough rather than within the local area.

### **6. Promoting a strong education & skills system**

A child friendly borough ensures that the education children and young people is effective and supports their development through into adulthood and employment with a focus on skills and aspiration

### **7. Delivering a Quality of Place in Doncaster**

A child friendly borough promotes sustainability, safety and makes sure that children and young people can be proud of where they come from.

### **8. Delivering high quality services**

A child friendly borough ensures that all of the supportive services that young people may need or wish to access are joined up, tailored to their needs, and highly effective

19. Taking into account the need to satisfy our statutory duty and the potential for a more rigorous measure in terms of sufficiency, alongside recommendations of the APPG and our own local policy drivers, the need for a co-ordinated strategy is clear.

20. In brief, the Doncaster Youth Strategy will:

- Ensure sufficiency of positive activities for children and young people in the borough, in line with the Education Act 1996; through robust monitoring of activities, number of young people engaged and activity by locality.
- Support the social and personal development of children and young people, raising their aspirations, building resilience and enabling them to make informed decisions. It will give all children and young people across the borough the

opportunity to widen their experiences and have access to a range of diverse and innovative activities in the place where they live.

- Ensure that children and young people have a meaningful voice and influence regarding the activities and services available to them. We will move towards a model of 'for young people, by young people'.
- Through a partnership approach, reduce the demand for more specialist interventions, by facilitating closer working relationships with colleagues in a range of other services including Social Care, Youth Offending and CAMHS. This could also be through diversionary activities for our more vulnerable young people through targeted youth work.
- Through an all age approach, ensure that there are greater opportunities for young people to be involved in inter-generational activities, social action and social enterprise; reducing the likelihood of social isolation and loneliness.

21. A strong and stable infrastructure is required to ensure we are able to deliver on the Youth Strategy, EXPECT Youth are central to this.
22. Over the last 3 years, EXPECT Youth has increased its reach to children and young people across the borough through a co-ordinated approach. Ensuring youth provision is delivered in the areas and communities that need it most. It has further strengthened community capacity building through supporting existing youth groups and identifying new providers. Between August 2017 and August 2018, there were 110,195 engagements with young people. It is anticipated that the Annual Report 2018- 2019 will show a further increase.
23. In addition, over the last 12 - 18 months EXPECT Youth has established both company and charitable status and following a review of governance an Independent Chair has been appointed alongside the founder members of EXPECT Youth an additional 3 independent trustees have been appointed.
24. To support the continued partnership between EXPECT Youth and the Council, the monitoring arrangements put in place to cover the period the grant was distributed (final payment March 2019) have been extended for a further year. This will ensure a greater focus a smaller set of shared outcomes, including:
  - Monitoring the numbers of children and young people accessing youth provision
  - Delivering a robust training programme for voluntary and community groups.
  - Developing community profiles, detailing demographic and provision information to ensure activity is focused in the right areas.
25. To continue with the current commissioning arrangements with EXPECT Youth as the facilitator and convenor of universal youth provision, supporting the rationale to continue to discharge the Council's statutory duty to provide access for young people to high quality places to go and things to do. This will be further strengthen under the Youth Strategy.
26. The principles of the Youth Strategy align to a number of outcomes in the trailblazer including but not exclusive to:
  - Reduction in referrals into specialist CAMHS

- CYP feel more resilient and have better emotional wellbeing and mental health

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

27. To endorse the principles of the Youth Strategy and support continued discharging of the Council's statutory duty to EXPECT Youth.
28. To continue to monitor the outcomes of EXPECT Youth to ensure alignment to the overall Youth Strategy.
29. To consider the future commissioning arrangements of EXPECT Youth going forward to ensure that adequate resource is available to continue to fund the organisation infrastructure in order to deliver on the Youth Strategy.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

30. In order to ensure we meet our statutory duty and in addition deliver on the Youth Strategy, all of the above options are essential.
31. Through the continued commissioning of EXPECT Youth it enables the council to meet its statutory duties at a much reduced cost. In addition, a partnership approach allows the development of a much more diverse and responsive offer for our children and young people.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

32.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>Through the delivery of the revised youth offer, young people will have access to a wealth of experience that will support their aspirations; from programmes on essential life skills through to opportunities for social action and enterprise.</p> <p>EXPECT Youth will continue to seek match funding and corporate social responsibility.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> </ul>	<p>The Youth Offer will give young people access to a diverse range of activities in the area they live but also across the borough.</p> <p>All youth providers will be expected to deliver on the Child Friendly Doncaster Participation Standards so will aspire to be child-led in their provision.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>Doncaster's Youth Strategy will complement the outcomes delivered in our corporate strategies and plans. It will do this by, supporting the social and personal development of children and young people, building their resilience and raising aspiration.</p> <p>It will ensure that learning is not limited to the classroom but through youth activity, social action and structured youth development programmes.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>The extension of the current funding to EXPECT will ensure the delivery of provision, not only for young people but also to children age 8 years and up. Therefore, we can start to engage with young people at the earliest possible stage.</p>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership working is central to the success of both EXPECT Youth and the Youth Strategy. This expands across voluntary, community and faith youth providers as well as partnership with EXPECT and the council.</p> <p>The youth offer will be child and young person led, in that it will be responsive and diverse in its approach.</p>

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

33. Following the decision in 2016 to pump prime EXPECT Youth and deliver our youth provision in a different way, to not continue to support the development and

sustainability of EXPECT could risk reputational damage to the council as well as uncertainty in the delivery of youth provision.

34. EXPECT Youth secured over £1.5million in match funding through the Social Mobility Opportunity Area and this funding is ending shortly. Therefore, the need to ensure sustainability is time critical in order to progress the priorities of the Youth Strategy.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials.....NJD ... Date.....25/11/2019..]**

35. The Education Act 1996 places an obligation on the Council to "so far as reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons....access to sufficient education and leisure time activities which are for the improvement of their wellbeing."
36. The report details the Council's approach to the delivery of Youth Services.
37. Further Legal advice can be provided to the panel as requested.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [AB 25/11/19.]**

38. Funding of £475k to be paid to EXPECT Youth over 3 years was approved by Cabinet on 18th October 2016. The first payment of £250k was paid in March 2017, the second instalment of £150k was paid in March 2018, and the final payment of £75k was made in June 2019. The funding is regarded as a grant under financial procedure rules and a funding agreement was drawn up which includes monitoring arrangements and a provision for repayment if the funding is not fully spent. As at August 2019, EXPECT Youth have spent £320k of the grant, and projected that a further £12k will be spent by March 2020. This will leave a balance of £143k unspent that will be available to be used to extend the current arrangements with EXPECT Youth until March 2021.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS JC..... Date 02/07/19**

39. At this stage, there are no Human Resources implications; however, specific Human Resources advice will be required throughout the project particularly in relation to staffing implications

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...PW Date.11/07/19.]**

40. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this report.

#### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials.....CW.....Date ...11/07/19.....]**

41. Public Health support the principle of ensuring children and young people are supported in their social and personal development, building their resilience and raising aspiration. These are all features that underpin good physical and emotional health in children and young people and set foundations for a positive trajectory into adulthood. It is important providers delivering to children and young people understand how they can promote and support health and wellbeing through their activities. Policies such as healthy eating, active travel, smoking, and safeguarding should all be in place to support the health and wellbeing of all who deliver and utilise the provision. Public health can provide policy examples and support with guidance on workplace standards. Targeting support and tailoring interventions for young people can be supported by the Public Lifestyle Survey.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...RM..... Date...22/11/19.....]**

42. A fundamental principle of the Youth Strategy is that there is equity and equality in the youth offer across Doncaster. Therefore the Youth Strategy sets out a number of principles, including that the offer is co-produced with children and young people and that where needed a tailored offer is available to ensure any barriers to accessing the youth offer are reduced.

## **CONSULTATION**

43. Extensive consultation has also previously been undertaken with young people accessing youth services and through the Youth Council to establish views of the current youth service and what they would like to see going forward. This has continued through work with the Youth Council, Young Advisors and children and young people within communities. Young people will play a central and active role in developing and influencing the future youth offer.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

44. EXPECT YOUTH (former STRATEGIC YOUTH ALLIANCE) March 2018

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

- SEND – Special Education Needs and Disability
- LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, And Questioning
- CAMHS - Child And Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) - NHS
- APPG – All Party Parliamentary Group

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