

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		PAF/21/15
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	12 November 2015	
<u>Essex Youth Service Progress update November 2015</u>		
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Background

1. The purpose of this report is to further update Members on the progress the Youth Service has made since the presentation of the Report to Cabinet on 25 February 2014.

In that report Councillor Gooding shared proposals for the new operating model and how from 2014/15 onwards the proposed service budget will be allocated. This brief report explains the progress so far.

2. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) The Youth Service SLT is in place and is working effectively.

3. Service Redesign The redesign is complete and is operating successfully; although we are still developing we have seen massive improvement in staff morale and a significant reduction in sickness and absence.

Date	All Absence	Short Term	10 Days	Long Term
Nov-14	203	92	93	6
Sep-15	122	28	25	0

4. Youth Work Outcomes The service launched the new outcomes framework in June 2014; along with a new utility to support community groups keep track of their members and achievements. This is the first period of reporting using Profile and RunAClub (April to August 2015).

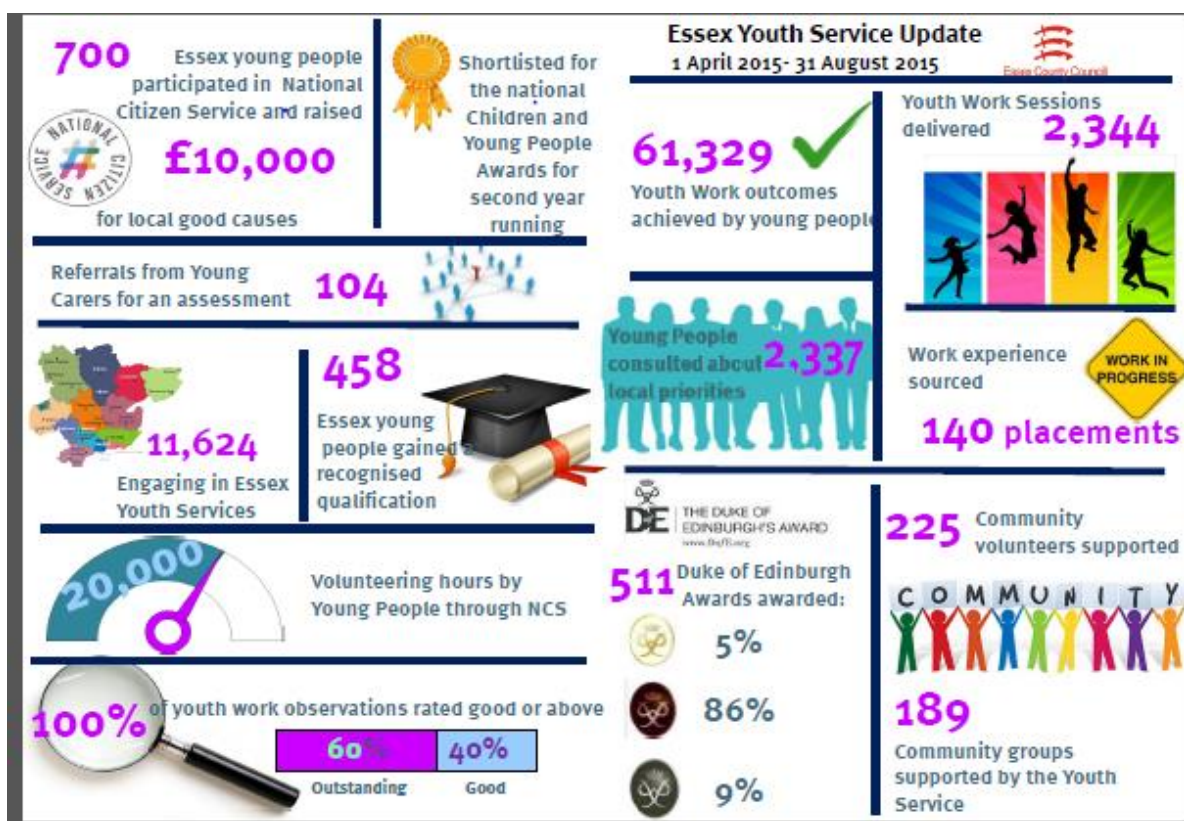
Youth work Update April 2015- September 2015

This visual shows the key achievements so far this year:

- 61,329 youth work outcomes achieved by young people, this represents over a 200% increase from this time last year
- 2,344 youth work sessions delivered in Essex
- 189 Community Youth Clubs in partnership and supported by EYS
- 225 community volunteers being supported to work effectively with young people

Other achievements this year include:

- 62 volunteers attended youth work training
- 73 completed safeguarding training
- 2020 young people and families attended our NCS Summer 2015 Graduation ceremonies at Essex University



5. **Duke of Edinburgh Award (D of E).** We have now successfully negotiated a delivery model for Essex that will see an expansion of the D of E and includes a much closer working relationship with colleagues in Windsor

6. **Young Carers** Provision is procured across the county with a long term strategy being developed to ensure a better provision.

- 7. Youth Strategy Groups (YSGs)** The groups have all identified their outcomes for this year and are at a different stage of development although they are proving successful across the county.
- 8. National Citizen Service (NCS)** This continues to be a successful flagship programme with an announcement expected in CSR.
- 10. Young Inspectors** Several groups have been trained to inspect services for young people with further groups being trained.

Commissioning through Community Capacity Building: A Case Study

Low cost, no cost commissioning

Background

The Youth Service in Essex had been a traditional and well-resourced service, employing high volumes of skilled youth and community workers delivering youth services across all localities in Essex. The facilities and estate are in good order and historically been for the sole use of the service. The service was well respected within the council and achieved Good Ofsted ratings. Limited genuine partnership working with the voluntary sector existed with the service mainly providing some funding to groups such as the Essex Boys and Girls Clubs and Young Farmers.

Objectives

Changes in thinking across the sector were signalling that new ways of delivering outcomes for young people needed to be considered. The strengthening voluntary sector and young people themselves were starting to ask for a greater say in services that were provided for them.

2010 saw a significant change in climate within local government when financial austerity really began to take hold. The Schools Children and Families Directorate faced a £48m funding cut with many grants being cut in-year. As a result the Youth Service faced a £6.5m funding reduction from £12.5m to £6m. With employee costs accounting for a significant share of the budget, the service had to fundamentally re-think its offer and hence the service began its commissioning journey.

ECC was still in the early stages of developing its approach to becoming a commissioning authority. The service lead began to think about the future of the service with the focus on continuing to achieve high quality outcomes in an environment of ever decreasing resources. The service began to engage directly with service users and the community to understand what was important to them. In general they wanted places for young people to go, for young people to meet their friends, the feedback also revealed that they were indifferent about who delivered this service as long as good quality provision was organised by good quality youth workers. The young people were unaware of the difference between an LA Youth Worker, Volunteer or voluntary sector youth worker.

The only way to sustain provision with limited funding and to give young people a genuine voice in the services they wanted was to stimulate and support the community to deliver its own services. The emphasis was not about protecting the service through austere times, it was about protecting the outcomes that youth work supports. A model of Community Development was developed specific to meet the

needs of Essex, “**Commissioning through Community Capacity Building**”.

Community development is a way of working with communities using the skills of a youth worker. Its key purpose is to build a communities capacity to support its young people based on justice, equality and mutual respect.

Implementation

The Essex Youth Service Community Development model involves changing the relationships between our young people, their families and people in positions of power, so that everyone can take part in the issues that affect their lives. It starts from the principle that within any community there is a wealth of knowledge and experience which, if used in creative ways, can be channeled into collective action to achieve our communities' desired goals.

Youth Workers work alongside people in their own communities to help build relationships with key people and organisations, to identify local need and develop provision to meet that need. They create opportunities for the community to learn new skills and, by enabling people to act together, youth & community development practitioners help to foster social inclusion and equality.

The model works on the basis that the district commissioner, a qualified youth worker, works with the community to enable them to deliver services by offering resources and expertise. In the past to run a youth club the council would have employed 3 youth workers and provided a significant amount of other support such as buildings etc. Now youth workers work alongside young people and their families in their own communities to help build relationships with key people to identify local need and develop provision to meet that need themselves. They then create opportunities for the community to learn new skills to support this need.

In order to support these new groups the Youth Service provides access to a qualified youth worker and support from our partners who work with young people and communities by helping them to access:

- Advice on how to set up a youth club
- Free youth work volunteer training
- Help identifying and measuring outcomes
- Help writing bids and looking for funding
- DBS checks
- A cloud based support platform delivered by “RunAClub”
- Free curriculum support and resources
- Help with policies and procedures
- Access to premises
- Health and Safety guidance
- Access to accreditations and awards

Successes and Challenges

Like any major transformation programme the service has faced and will continue to face many challenges along the journey. This change in approach required fundamental changes to the way in which employees worked with communities, which in turn requires employees to develop their own skills and confidence. Many employees had entered youth work as a result of themselves having experienced the positive impact of a youth worker in their lives. Moving from provision to facilitation was and continues to be a challenge for many. Internally we also had to work hard to remove bureaucracy to free up the use of our premises and find solutions to safeguarding challenges. Not all communities embraced the new model, we faced community apathy and resistance but found creative ways to overcome this.

Further significant challenges have been to develop a process to ensure good quality youth work is consistent across Essex. We also needed to measure outcomes and demonstrate impact of youth work intervention; this has taken significant work managed by creating a well written Youth Work Curriculum for Essex.

There are many benefits to be achieved from the new model. The key benefit is to increase the volume and variety of provision for less money. Already, the results have been startling, rather than having a youth centre open and staffed by the council 3 times a week, by opening the resources to the community, the centres are open daily increasing the provision. Currently there are 105 additional sessions every week being facilitated with our support. We are truly working in partnership with our communities and young people rather than providing lip service to partnership working. Our own employees, some of whom were sceptical about the change, have also seen benefits through improved development providing them with greater skills and knowledge, which in turn has ensured better recognition of the work undertaken by youth workers and the service. The service now supports an increased opportunity for volunteering for our young people.

We have also identified new funding streams generating grant funding, establishing partnership working and funding from other sectors such as schools, national government and the Youth Offending Service which in turn provides a more secure future for youth work.