

MAIDSTONE LOCALITY BOARD MEETING

14 March 2012, 10.00 am - 12.05 pm, Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

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| Present: | Cllr Beerling | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Carter | Kent County Council |
| | Chell | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr Chittenden | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr Cooke | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr Daley | Kent County Council |
| | Edwins | NHS West Kent |
| | Cllr FitzGerald | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Cllr Garland | Maidstone Borough Council (Chairman) |
| | Cllr Greer | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Cllr Hill | Kent County Council |
| | Hughes | Kent Association of Local Councils |
| | Cllr D Mortimer | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Cllr Mrs Ring | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Cllr Robertson | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr Mrs Stockell | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr Mrs Whittle | Kent County Council |
| | Cllr J.A. Wilson | Maidstone Borough Council |
| | Cllr Mrs Wilson | Maidstone Borough Council |

| MINUTES | |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Cllr Chris Garland, Leader of Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), and Chair of the Maidstone Locality Board.</p> <p>Cllr Garland welcomed everyone present to this special meeting of the Maidstone Locality Board.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Alison Broom (Maidstone Borough Council), Chief Inspector Adrian Futers (Maidstone Area, Kent Police), Keith Abbott (Kent County Council), Martin Adams (Safer Maidstone Partnership) and Councillor Eric Hotson.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Youth Service Proposals for Maidstone</p> <p>3.1 Introduction & Background (Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for</p> |

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Customer and Communities, KCC):

- The reconfiguration of Kent youth services has had a lengthy gestation period;
- The basic model is of direct delivery, plus commissioned services;
- Consultation has taken place across Kent and did result in revised plans;
- These plans were taken to all 12 Kent Locality Boards, and it was agreed that further work would be carried out;
- KCC is seeking endorsement of these revised plans, so that the shape of local youth services can be agreed, so that, in turn, KCC can proceed with developing a commissioning framework.

3.2 Outline of Youth Service proposals for Maidstone (Nigel Baker, Head of Youth Services, KSCC):

Referencing the maps circulated in the meeting:

Map 1 – Index of Multiple Deprivation LSOA showing key areas of relative deprivation (for further information go to

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/research/indicesdeprivation/deprivation10/>

Map 2 – Maidstone 13-19 population

Map 3 – Youth service current provision

Map 4 – Present local community led youth provision

The key messages from the report 'Transformation of Youth Services in Maidstone', a joint paper by Nigel Baker & Zena Cooke:

- Youth service transformation intends to set the framework for collaborative working across all partners;
- The target age range remains at 13-19 yrs;
- Youth work needs to be a fun & challenging vehicle to help young persons transition into adulthood;
- Youth service transformation is NOT about buildings, but about quality outcomes;
- Supporting and enabling local voluntary sector groups to 'step up to the plate', build capacity, open opportunities to develop local social enterprises/ community interest companies;
- KCC Cabinet member stopped short of making a final decision on youth services to consult further with Locality Boards.

3.3 Consultation:

- Statutory 90 day public and staff consultation closed end October;
- Some 700 responses were received from groups and individuals across the County, 69 responses were received from Maidstone;
- Although there was no clear support for any one hub, there was good support for InfoZone, and much concern over the proposed closure of Shepway & Lenham centres;
- In addition, a case was made for close partnership with Switch Café;

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- Overall, no clear direction emerged from the responses.

3.4 Methodology for youth service transformation:

- A full needs analysis using the Joint Strategic needs Assessment for Children and the Local Children's Trust Boards Needs Assessments were used;
- The proposed youth service model is aligned with what is out there now and with existing youth service priorities;
- An Equalities Impact Assessment was required by law, and was aided by independent research from the University of Glasgow;

3.5 The local youth offer:

1. Direct delivery

- Retain InfoZone:
 - Will prove a broad range of services – more than just a youth club
 - Will be the home location of the Senior Youth Practitioner
- Switch café:
 - A clear collaborative approach with Switch
 - Switch could co-locate with InfoZone or move to other premises
- School-based Youth Tutor (at present not allocated to a school):
 - Local decision as to where to base the youth tutor
 - Recommended to be based at Swadelands School.
 - This proposal will be offered to the Head teacher at a cost to the school of £14-£15k pa.

Much support for this proposal was expressed around the table:

PC – Supports concept, the youth tutor could be based across two schools, could develop after school and weekend activities.

GC – Opportunity to create partnerships with schools and academies. Could secure the future of Shepway through commissioning.

PS – Given the very sparse youth provision in rural areas, this could be addressed through in-school youth provision.

NB – Referred to Dover for an example of a Community Youth Tutor.

JH – Could the 2nd school-based Community Youth Tutor be funded from the Community Budget? What is the approx cost? (some £45,000), school would pay pro-rata.

- Maidstone Street-Based project:

The youth worker could be based with MBC Community Safety Unit

Could focus on a rural area e.g. west of A229

2. KCC County Youth Services (part of core offer)

- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Kent Youth County Council
- Outdoor Education centres
- Quality assurance
- Curriculum development

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3. Commissioned services

- This had an initial County-wide pot of £1.2m, plus part of the early intervention grant of £600k - £1.8m total
- No Districts have put in to the pot
- £200k is set aside to commission infrastructure organisations e.g. Scouts, Guides, Young Farmers, etc
- Using a resource allocation model, £138,000 pa for 3 yrs is allocated to Maidstone
- Commissioning principles:
 - Need to decide the outcomes to commission against
 - Dynamic Purchasing commissioning framework will be flexible to attract small providers
 - Pre-qualification Questionnaire – asking how the organisation knows its local audience
 - Contracts to start January 2013
 - Can commission more if new funding is found
- Key local priorities, e.g.
 - Commit to somehow retain Shepway & Park Wood
 - Address rural isolation – young people are not expected to travel to Maidstone Hub

3.6 Discussion

IC – What has happened to existing youth service budget bank accounts?

NB – Youth centres were not spending it all, they are now held centrally. KCC is allocating £150-£200k for new built provision in Tunbridge Wells.

IC – There was a recommendation from MBC Overview & Scrutiny Committee to retain Shepway which has not been followed up.

ZC – The unintended consequences of the consultation was that it focussed on hubs. Clarification received that provision in Lenham & Shepway could be retained.

GC – Both youth centres will remain priority areas.

AC – Satisfied that there has been effective consultation, but what happens to organisations with a proven track record but for a different age range – how will that be addressed in the commissioning framework? Will MBC be adopting a similar commissioning model?

ZC – MBC moving towards a more commissioned model of provision, looking to align budgets with joint commissioning. Already very good partnerships with County on provision up to 8-9yrs.

JW – Referred to page 6 of joint report – there are 5 rural service centres, not just Lenham. What is happening to the youth club mini buses? How will s106 monies be used to boost youth provision e.g. Harrietsham?

NB – Looking at the total vehicle fleet, to have a pool of vehicles in each area. Fleet management function, could move to voluntary organisations.

PC – Agrees that any s106 youth monies be put on the table and decided upon jointly.

FW – No mention thus far of High Street Ward – very culturally diverse and deprived.

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NB – InfoZone will cover High St Ward.
MF – Will youth work with young offenders, and engage with challenging youths, must ensure commissioning framework targets difficult to reach youth to prevent ASB.
NB – Will be seeking integration between youth offending team and youth work to increase 'reach'.
JH – Some 46% of 13-19 yr olds live in rural areas, only 25% of whom live in rural service centres. Concerned that many 13-19 yr olds will fall through the gap caused by sparse services and poor transport. Important that local communities become both providers and consumers of youth services. How will Parish Councils gain the skills to do youth work?
NB – KCC Youth Service already provide first level training.
GC – Recommends a Youth Service Focus Group is set up to work through the detail.
SB – Need to involve/co-opt local experts & youth workers.
ZC – Need to avoid difficulties with procurement interests.
DM - £138k is not enough.
NB – Funding is not fixed, £138k is a minimum amount.
MR – How will delivery be monitored and commissioned providers be held to account for the outcomes they have promised?
NB – See page 4 of joint report – Quality Assurance.
MG – Supports the strategic thrust of the proposals, but what level of commercial involvement will there be?
PC – This is a good opportunity to deliver a better youth service, cheaper. Must now look to what the £138,000 will commission. Must join up to the good things in schools, and somehow keep Shepway open.
MH – He is determined to deliver a better Youth Service.

3.7 Recommendations to Maidstone Locality Board

1. The Maidstone Locality Board is asked to consider the report of Nigel Baker, Head of Integrated Youth Services, the presented demographic and thematic information and Appendix A, and agree the allocation of the KCC direct delivery of youth work within the Borough.
2. The Maidstone Locality Board is asked to consider and discuss Appendix B and the proposed specification for youth work activities, and endorse this approach to the commissioning of services at a local level.
3. The Maidstone Locality Board is asked to nominate the Youth Service Focus Group and an appropriate local lead officer to support a joint approach to the commissioning of youth services at a local level.
4. The Maidstone Locality Board agrees to receive regular progress reports on the commissioning process at future meetings. Regular in this context means before every full MLB meeting.

A Youth Service Focus Group be convened before the MLB meeting 25 June.

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| 4. | Duration of Meeting 10.00 a.m. to 12.05 p.m. |