

AGENDA ITEM 5

MAIDSTONE LOCALITY BOARD

Transformation of Youth Services in Maidstone

Date: 1 October 2012

Report by Nigel Baker, Head of Integrated Youth Services, Kent County Council

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Following extensive work with KCC Procurement, a Dynamic Purchasing System has been employed by Integrated Youth Services to deliver an extensive range of commissioned services for young people from January 2012.
- 1.2** KCC's Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities has taken a key decision to continue to meet the statutory duty for the provision of education and recreational leisure time activities (youth work) through the continuation of a core offer of open access youth work delivered by KCC, augmented by an increased level of services commissioned from local voluntary and community groups. The new model of service provision will commence in January 2013.
- 1.3** The specific details of the provision to be delivered by KCC and the priorities for commissioned youth work have been agreed following consultation with Locality Boards, supported by relevant KCC and local officers to ensure the model is guided and informed by local decision making.
- 1.4** Detailed work on implementation of the new model commenced in May 2012.

2.0 The Local Youth Offer

- 2.1** The provision of youth work activities in this district comprises a number of key elements:

KCC Direct Delivery via:

- building base (InfoZone)
- school-based community youth tutor (Maidstone Skills Centre)
- street-based work

- county services, incorporating the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Kent Youth County Council and Outdoor Education

Recruitment has progressed well over the summer period and the majority of key staff have been confirmed in post; recruitment of the community youth tutor has been held until the new term and should be completed before Christmas.

Commissioned Delivery via four 'lots':

- South East Urban, including use of Shepway Youth Centre
- Rural and Isolated areas
- Lenham and surrounds
- Contribution to aims of the Local Children's Trust Plan

2.2 Across the county, 124 organisations successfully joined the Commissioning Framework at the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire stage in June. These organisations were then invited to submit tenders between 27 July and 7 September. By the deadline, 54 organisations had submitted a total of 221 bids to deliver the 47 commissioning lots that are available across Kent. In Maidstone, 22 bids have been received across the available lots.

2.3 The commissioning budget for Maidstone is £138,000 p.a.

3.0 Evaluation

3.1 Tenders are being evaluated in Maidstone by a small task and finish group, drawing representation of senior officers and members from KCC and MBC.

3.2 The views of local young people will also be sought as part of the decision-making process.

3.3 A final report which draws together the results of all evaluation processes across the county will be drawn together into a final report that will be presented at the end of October to the Youth Transformation Project Board, chaired by the KCC Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities.

4.0 Contracts and Mobilisation

4.1 Contracts will be awarded to successful providers in early November.

4.2 A period of mobilisation will commence immediately thereafter. IYS will work closely with new providers to ensure as seamless as possible transfer of services. This will be particularly important if existing youth centres transfer from KCC delivery to a new voluntary sector provider.

- 4.3 In the event that providers cannot be identified to deliver any aspect of the lots, IYS has undertaken to establish interim arrangements to ensure ongoing youth work delivery in the short term whilst further commissioning processes take place. This might involve a range of solutions from paying for additional part-time youth workers through to the use in certain cases of interim 'caretaker' youth organisations to sustain existing youth facilities.