

## **Commissioning of Youth Work Contracts**

### **Report of the Executive Director Children's Services**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:** Learning City, Safe City, Attractive and Inclusive City

**CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT:** Delivering Customer Focused Services, Efficient and Effective Council

#### **1. Why has this report come to Committee?**

- 1.1 This report is in response to a request from Scrutiny Committee for detailed performance information on each of the Commissioned Youth Work Contracts and is a follow on to the report presented to Scrutiny Committee in March 2011.
- 1.2 The previous report gave detail of the commissioning process and of engagement and consultation as part of the process. It noted that the current contracts have been in place since April 2010 and are two year contracts with regular performance reviews. Members were keen to understand the performance for each contract and this report includes this data.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Sunderland City Council has been delivering universal neighbourhood youth work throughout the city using the Council's Commissioning of Youth Work Strategy since 2005.
- 2.2 The commissioning arrangements addressed the unequal spread and access to youth work resources for young people across the city. Contracts were based on assessment of need, provided stability for long term planning and made the best use of existing resources and expertise at a neighbourhood level.
- 2.3 Through inspection and review using the Youth Development Groups Quality Assurance Framework, Standards and Management Information System we were able to demonstrate a year on year continued improvement in service and increase in meeting national set targets.
- 2.4 The commissioning arrangements were reviewed in advance of the contracts for April 2010 and were enhanced by:

- Extensive consultations with Elected Members to consider local and area profiles.
  - Service evaluations and performance reviews of provision and a comprehensive needs analysis
  - A series of needs assessment events involving Elected Members, young people and professionals. This consultation process influenced the shape and redesign of the youth work contracts.
- 2.5 There are 24 contracts including one for each ward except where two wards are combined because of cross boundary issues. There is also one city wide contract for the black and minority ethnic (BME) community.
- 2.6 The contracts ensure the delivery of a minimum of three universal youth work sessions per ward using a wide range of different methods including centre based, detached street work, music and arts, personal development opportunities, outdoor education experiences and health workshops. They have ward based targets and are performance led with payment linked in part to how well the participation target is met in each ward. In addition each contract has regular inspections, a six month assessment and an annual review.
- 2.7 The recent Ofsted visit which looked at the commissioning process considered our process to have a number of features of best practice, including:
- Long-standing and strong partnerships with voluntary sector providing a good basis for commissioning arrangements
  - The obvious commitment of elected members and officers to youth services
  - robust commissioning arrangements which adhere to the Council's procurement and commissioning strategy and provide valued training and support for providers
  - Providers ability to use their knowledge, skills and experience of the commissioning process to attract additional external funding
  - The enhancement of delivery through eg Connexions, mobile and XL village provision
  - The work of the Sunderland Voluntary Youth Forum is highly regarded
  - The involvement of young people in local decision making and in strategy is well embedded and informs commissioned services. It is suggested that their role in the formal commissioning process, however, is underdeveloped.

### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 includes the performance information for each contract. Overall all outcomes have increased, however the position is variable within the providers.

3.2 There are 4 areas where an element of performance is below the agreed targets:

3.2.1 Barnes

Accredited outcomes

<b>Set</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Actual</b>
45	45	35

Contract is delivered through a new agency for the ward and there were some initial difficulties experienced including accessing suitable venues. The renovation of Barnes Park impacted on access to young people.

An Action plan developed as part of the Annual Review process includes:

- Completion of Barnes Park renovations with access to the Coach House negotiated to deliver a youth work session
- Improved programme planning to include activities that support recorded and accredited outcomes and access to a range of accreditation routes
- Continued development of sessions at Plains Farm & Humbledon Community Initiative
- Detached session that also promotes youth provision
- Negotiation of access to Richard Avenue Primary School

3.2.2 Copt Hill and Houghton

Participation

<b>Set</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Actual</b>
306	326	309

Shiney Row

Participation

<b>Set</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Actual</b>
164	169	109

Contract is delivered through a new agency for the ward and there were some initial difficulties including developing provision with young people, access to suitable venues and responding to limited provision in Shiney Row and Penshaw. These were compounded by delays in transfers with the previous contracted agency and the long term sickness of a key worker

An Action plan developed as part of the Annual Review process includes:

- Establishment of sessions at Penshaw CA, Gentoo building in Shiney Row, Football Fridays at Houghton Kepier school and the development of Gentoo Bungalow in Fence Houses

### 3.2.3 St Peter's Recorded Outcomes

Set	Agreed	Actual
76	76	56

### Accredited Outcomes

Set	Agreed	Actual
38	38	33

Particular issues for the provider included the long term sickness of two staff, changes made to delivery during year as previous delivery did not seem to be effectively engaging young people which allowed targets to be achieved for participation but not for recorded outcomes nor accreditations and changes in management which led to delays in responding to underachievement.

An action plan developed as part of the Annual Review process includes:

- Back filling of senior worker post with experienced member of staff
- Staff training in the use of the Management Information System with closer management of the contract
- Establishing a fixed youth base in the area

## 4. Conclusion:

- 4.1 Securing effective and efficient youth provision is a challenge. The process in Sunderland has many recognised features of best practice. The commissioned contracts provide a solid base on which to build the current and future core youth offer.
- 4.2 Of the 96 indicators (based on four targets in each of the 24 contracts) only five have not been achieved. Based on the performance to date, and the agreed action plans where appropriate, all of the existing ward contracts will continue to deliver until March 2012.

## 5. Recommendation:

- 5.1 To note the contents of the report

**Contact Officer:** Sandra Mitchell, Head of Early Intervention and Locality Services

Telephone: 0191 5611438  
[sandra.mitchell@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.mitchell@sunderland.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1: Contract Performance Detail

Targets	Contact			Participation			Recorded			Accredited		
	Set	Agreed	Actual	Set	Agreed	Actual	Set	Agreed	Actual	Set	Agreed	Actual
Barnes	249	250	353	150	150	158	90	90	106	45	45	35
Castle & Redhill	600	640	1046	361	384	501	216	230	264	100	115	118
Copt Hill & Houghton	509	543	879	306	326	309	184	196	208	92	98	176
Doxford	271	272	317	163	163	172	98	98	101	49	49	50
Fulwell	235	248	417	141	149	171	85	89	106	42	45	50
Hendon	291	300	950	175	180	325	105	108	193	52	54	60
Hetton	234	263	381	140	158	202	84	95	200	42	47	50
Millfield	294	295	431	177	177	189	106	106	142	53	53	100
Pallion	337	337	958	202	202	533	121	121	152	61	61	75
Ryhope	256	256	498	153	153	265	92	92	222	46	46	183
St Anne's	280	280	309	168	168	202	101	101	101	50	50	53
St Chad's	187	187	281	112	112	124	67	67	69	34	34	36
St Michael's	220	220	235	132	132	140	79	79	90	40	40	48
St Peter's	210	212	405	126	127	140	76	76	56	38	38	33
Sandhill	252	253	843	151	152	454	91	91	136	45	46	53
Shiney Row	273	282	345	164	169	109	98	101	103	49	51	55
Silksworth	255	255	420	153	153	194	92	92	94	46	46	46
Southwick	243	270	537	146	162	211	87	97	100	44	49	49
Washington Central	242	242	610	145	145	211	87	87	119	44	44	45
Washington East	291	292	574	175	175	212	105	105	117	52	53	53
Washington North	262	262	497	157	157	190	94	94	97	47	47	53
Washington South	238	238	437	143	143	204	86	86	86	43	43	59
Washington West	230	230	534	138	138	189	83	83	86	41	41	50
BME	271	273	338	163	164	171	98	98	105	49	49	51

**Set** is the targets based on population of young people agreed 13-19 years in each ward

**Agreed** is the target contractors said they could achieve in their tenders

**Actual** is the achieved number in 2010 - 2011 for each performance indicator

All projects have achieved or over achieved their agreed targets with the exception of those highlighted in red above. Reasons for underachievement are noted in para 3.2 of the report.