

Community Services & Licensing Committee
INFORMATION SHEET (NO.1)
July 2018**Youth Strategy Update****Introduction and Background**

Delivery of youth services in accordance to the current SDC youth work strategy (2017-2020) began in April 2017. www.stroud.gov.uk/media/355975/sdc-youth-work-strategy-2017-2020-approved.pdf

The youth participation support service relating to the previous one year strategy (2016/17) had been previously commissioned to an external provider. Whilst some matters of concern regarding delivery had been known, it was decided by the Corporate Team that the contracted providers one year contract for 2016/17, should be extended to cover quarters 1 and 2 (April to September 2017) of year one (2017/18) of the new strategy.

The contractor had a number of staffing issues between April and September (2017), which resulted in being unable to fulfil some outputs and subsequent outcomes – a financial settlement relating to this under performance was agreed. They also confirmed to us that they would not be tendering for any future contract.

During the aforementioned period, the procurement of a 2.5 year contract (beginning October 2017) was unsuccessful, with no tenders received - this was somewhat predicted. With professional market awareness and indications from market research (carried out during the pre-procurement stage), evidence of a very narrow market for such specialist youth work services was made clear.

Subsequently, the decision to bring service delivery 'in house' was taken by Corporate Team. Interim staff support for our respective youth voice groups was minimal through short term project work. The recruitment process culminated in two fixed term posts (1.75 FTE) being filled and respective employment with SDC began at the end of February 2018. Jemma Grieve (Youth Participation Officer) and Rachael Hill (Youth Work Officer) are now part of the Community Services Team and line managed by Steve Miles (Senior Youth Officer).

Progress since April 2018

Following initial induction of new staff, delivery so far in year two of the current strategy has been very positive. Some youth voice groups have required intensive work to rebuild trusted and meaningful relationships with respective members. Meanwhile recruitment of young people through schools and various other youth groups has also been a prominent feature in the evolving youth work programme.

Whilst staffing outputs have increased, it is too early to fully capture the outcomes for young people – these are defined through volunteer hours and the 'cluster of

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capabilities' stated in the Catalyst Framework (Young Foundation) and referred to in the strategy. <https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Framework-of-outcomes-for-young-people-July-2012.pdf>

Partnership working with various community stakeholders, including other youth work agencies who provide different types of youth provision, has also been significant - this is imperative for developing meaningful relationships over time. The impact of such work takes time, but having dedicated staff with skills and knowledge employed 'in-house', is already making this aspect of the work more efficient.

Highlights so far, include;

- Further development of our dedicated website: www.stroudyouthvoice.co.uk
- Refurbishment of our social media presence: a 'clear up' of inactive Facebook accounts set up by former contractors. An active Twitter account will follow in autumn 2018. Meanwhile, we are now fully active via: www.facebook.com/stroudyouthvoice/
- A youth council member's review of SDYC projects from last year. Subsequently, key issues and projects have been agreed for 2018/19 including:
 - *Improvements to school nursing and sexual health services;*
 - *Development of a youth friendly GP surgery initiative;*
 - *Increased voter registration across the District;*
 - *Involvement in SDC local plan review;*
 - *Continued advocating for lowering the voting age to 16;*
 - *Continued work with NHS CCG on mental health issues.*
- Production of a quarterly Stroud Youth Voice newsletter – the first edition was circulated in June and captures more detail on our progress across a number of youth voice projects and programmes, since April 2018. A second edition will be published early September. Newsletters also available: www.stroud.gov.uk/community-and-living/youth-and-community-work

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