

17th January 2022

Agenda Item: 12

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

INTRODUCTION OF DIVERTPLUS AND CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Committee of the successful Youth Endowment Fund Application and the DivertPlus project it will fund.
2. To seek approval to establish 1 FTE Youth Worker post (Youth Worker JNC grade) in the Youth Justice Service Outreach and Interventions Team from 1st April 2022 on a two-year fixed term contract to support the delivery of DivertPlus.

Information

DivertPlus

3. A successful bid led by the Violence Reduction Unit has seen Nottinghamshire receive funds from the Home Office and Youth Endowment Fund which combined will enable the development of an innovative approach to the earlier diversion of children and young people from the justice system. The project is operating under the name of DivertPlus and has received funding until March 2024. Contributors to the bid include Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City Youth Justice Services, Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire NHS Liaison and Diversion and a number of Community and Voluntary Sector partners.
4. DivertPlus is a multi-agency team in both the City and Mansfield Custody Suites, commissioned to engage and work with children arrested for violence and a range of other offences. The target is children aged between 10 and 14 involved in violence or associated offences but would work up to 18 years of age and there is particular interest in those who have not previously been in the criminal justice system. The Team would complement the work of the NHS Liaison and Diversion Team which provides mental health support and of Inspire and Achieve U-Turn which supports young people, including young adults, into employment and training.
5. Key elements of the provision are:

- engagement and support for child in custody at the point of the 'teachable' / 'reachable' moment
- mentoring for nine months to a year
- speech and language support (this is an issue for more than 80% of children entering the youth justice system).

Recruitment to support delivery of DivertPlus

6. Youth Justice Services in Nottinghamshire are made up of three multi-agency Locality Teams and a countywide Outreach and Interventions Team. The aims of the Youth Justice Services are to:
 - reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system
 - reduce the frequency and rate of re-offending by children and young people who are already within the youth justice system
 - keep the numbers of young people experiencing custody - either on remand or as a sentence of the court - to a minimum.
7. Youth Justice seeks to establish a 1 FTE Youth Worker post (Youth Worker JNC grade) to act as a mentor to children and young people upon release from Police custody. It is proposed that all young people open to the DivertPlus project have their needs assessed and have the option of being allocated a Youth Worker who will mentor and support them on a one-to-one basis with a view to focussing on positive activities during their leisure time.
8. The new post will be situated within the countywide Outreach and Interventions Team alongside a similar post operating to provide mentoring to young people at risk of exploitation and violence. To ensure a robust link to the Young People's Service, the post holder will be required to attend the fortnightly Youth Support Group meeting, jointly chaired by the Youth Service and the Youth Justice Service, which will allow for the appropriate stepping down of children and young people to universal provision.

Other Options Considered

9. Consideration has been given to expansion of Community and Voluntary Sector agencies, though this has not been deemed feasible considering the resourcing and access issues affecting youth work delivery in the County regions.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The recommendation is made in order that the service can meet the needs of complex young people receiving diversionary services through the DivertPlus project.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability

and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

12. The statutory aim of the youth justice system is to prevent children from offending (section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act (CDA) 1998). This act requires the local authority with its partners to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people and to deliver an effective local youth justice system.

Financial Implications

13. The establishment of the 1 FTE Youth Worker (Youth Worker JNC grade) post, with on-costs, has a maximum cost of £46,430 per annum for two years which will be met in full by funds provided by the Youth Endowment Fund to the Violence Reduction Unit. Associated expenses and operating costs of the employee will also be met by the Violence Reduction Unit. Consequently, there will be no cost to the Local Authority. In line with the Council's recruitment policy, the service would seek to recruit into the bottom of the band.

Human Resources Implications

14. The post will be recruited to in accordance with the agreed Vacancy Control Process and recruitment and selection policies.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That Committee approves the establishment of the following post in the Youth Justice Service Outreach and Interventions Team from 1st April 2022 on a two-year fixed term contract to support the delivery of DivertPlus:
 - 1 FTE Youth Worker (Youth Worker JNC grade).

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Constitutional Comments (ELP 04/01/22)

15. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (LCD 31/12/21)

16. The establishment of the 1 FTE Youth Worker (Youth Worker JNC grade) post, with on-costs, has a maximum cost of £46,430 per annum for two years which will be met in full by funds provided by the Youth Endowment Fund to the Violence Reduction Unit. Associated expenses and operating costs of the employee will also be met by the Violence Reduction Unit.

Human Resources Comments (GME 29/12/2021)

17. The post will be recruited to in accordance with the Council's vacancy control and recruitment procedures. As funding is initially in place for two years to March 2022, the post should be recruited to as a two-year fixed term contract with a view to permanence should the project funding be secured longer term.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Job description.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1538