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| Meeting of: | Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | Thursday, 19 March 2020 |
| Relevant Scrutiny Committee: | Learning and Culture |
| Report Title: | Youth Service Update |
| Purpose of Report: | To make Members aware of the progress made in the Youth Service since the reshaping of the service |
| Report Owner: | Paula Ham, Director of Learning & Skills |
| Responsible Officer: | Rhys Jones and Tara Reddy - Youth Services Managers |
| Elected Member and Officer Consultation: | <p>Clr Kathryn McCaffer</p> <p>Morwen Hudson, Head of Standards and Provision</p> <p>Martin Dacey, Lead for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing</p> |
| Policy Framework: | The recommendations of this report are within existing policy framework and budget. |
| Executive Summary: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service is performing well and provides good value for money. National Audit Statistics figures for 2018/19 show a reduction in overall numbers attending the service, however we ranked the 2nd highest performing Authority for the delivery of accredited outcomes. • Improved media and usage of ICT is increasing and maximising the publicity and marketing of the Vale Youth Service. This includes use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as mechanisms requested by young people. • The Youth Service has formed effective partnership working arrangements with The Urdd, Boys' and Girls' Clubs and Housing Providers to ensure there is non-duplication of services and to most effectively meet the needs of learners across the Vale of Glamorgan. • Internal improvement in data management has meant an increased usage of ONE alongside our own Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) Management Information System (MIS), ensuring greater communication, tracking and monitoring of young people during transitions and within services and projects. |

- The Youth Service have worked with Boys' and Girls' Clubs Wales in securing funding to work within rural communities to develop youth provision and services for young people of the rural Vale. This should enable provision in the rural Vale to develop and create more services and support. This will be monitored by the funders, Creative Rural Communities and regular meetings with the service.
- European Social Fund (ESF) programmes Inspire to Achieve (I2A) and Inspire to Work (I2W) both continue to deliver across the Vale with at risk and young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). I2W continues to succeed progress for post 16 learners in the Vale of Glamorgan and is 25% ahead of profile. The project has already exceeded its targets for the remaining 2 years of the project.
- The Youth Service procured the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS) to complete a Vale wide research project as to third sector and voluntary groups who work with youths (11-24 years old). We aim to identify how the service can further support these groups moving forward to ensure a quality provision is being provided to young people across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Youth Engagement Project (YEP) continues to deliver the Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum as part of Y Daith's wellbeing provision. Consideration regarding wider future working and potential new school builds within education will form part of the developments. This is as a consequence of the project providing extra provision for up to 60 young people per week. The service utilises elements of SWEET BTEC qualification at both level 1 and level 2, Agored Cymru units at all levels which can contribute towards qualifications, and also supports students in sitting their GCSEs with assessments and exams.
- The Welsh Government have supported The Youth Service with an additional £250,000.00 of grant funding aimed at targeting Youth homelessness and enhancing Youth Health and Wellbeing. This has meant recruiting 5 additional staff to deliver extra provision, sessions and support for those most vulnerable learners. This is alongside services already in existence to ensure non-duplication. The impact of these developments will be tracked through the Early Identification Tool (EIT) data alongside individual distance travelled tools. Elements of the YEPF and NEET data will also be used to monitor whether or not this work is successful in preventing young people from becoming homeless in the future.
- The funding of the Youth Service is split between 60% grant funding and 40% core funding. This is very positive and moving forward, this should provide greater sustainability in staffing. The additional grant funding allocation from Welsh Government has meant a rise in provision but it's precarious for the future so this is being utilised to top up provision rather than creating projects that would then have to go or of which are not sustainable.

Recommendations

1. That Members consider the progress made in the last 12 months of the Youth Service since the reshape in order to showcase the developments made and highlight the increase in provision.
2. That Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) receives a further progress update report in 12 months as to ongoing delivery alongside awareness of grants and European funding and the risks this poses.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. The Council has a strategic responsibility for implementing the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework to reduce the number of young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs). This is impacted by projects including YEP, I2A, I2W, Youth Homelessness and also Youth Destination data of which the Youth Service takes point; all these projects will help to keep numbers low and manageable moving forward.
2. To ensure that Members of the Scrutiny Committee continue to have oversight of the Youth Service.

1. Background

- 1.1 In recent years it was identified that the manner in which Youth Services (YS) were provided in the Vale of Glamorgan needed to evolve. There were several drivers for this change including Welsh Government's review of 'Extending Entitlement', recommendations in 'A Curriculum for Wales-Curriculum for Life', the 'Successful Futures' report by Professor Donaldson and the developing new National Youth Work Strategy for Wales. These policy changes required the service to take a more collaborative approach and develop improved and enhanced relationships with schools and local youth service providers.
- 1.2 The Youth Service is implementing a new approach for 11-25 year olds in the Vale of Glamorgan. This has been embedded via a range of open access and targeted interventions with a youth led focus on the needs of young people in each area of the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 1.3 This report seeks to make Elected Members aware of the progress made in the Vale of Glamorgan with regards to the Youth Service reshape and milestones achieved in developing it further.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The annual statistical release from National Audit Statistics on the registered number of young people engaged with the service as a percentage of the youth population for the Vale of Glamorgan for 2018/19 was 13%, a little under the

national average of 15%. This is a reduction from 2017-18 figure of 17% and is a result of rebuilding the service following restructure, loss of street-based services and the changing direction of the Families First projects for more targeted intervention and support.

- 2.2** The universal service supports a variety of provisions across the Vale where young people are able to access projects and learning opportunities, many of which are accredited. The service provides, on average 13 weekly sessions of open access youth provision in community settings and on the V-pod, alongside various project-based sessions including Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE), Local Democracy Week, consultations and many community events. This financial year, to date, the universal service has provided 564 sessions.
- 2.3** The universal service supports participation projects including Penarth Youth Action (PYS), Llantwit Youth Council (LYC) and the Vale Youth Cabinet, offering young people opportunities to have a voice and work on community issues. These projects have also provided opportunities to participate in an international youth exchange with four countries including Germany, where our young people had the opportunity to learn about participation and culture of other countries. The service also supported the Mark Your Mark ballot where 3386 young people across the Vale were able to vote for the issues most important to them. The top three devolved issues were: end knife crime, curriculum for life and mental health. The service will now ensure these issues and included in programme planning. The youth service facilitates the Rights Ambassadors project that teaches young people about children's rights and delivers rights workshops to children, young people and adults across the Vale. The project also supports primary and secondary schools with the Super and Student Ambassadors schemes from the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Support is also given to school councils, for example, signposting of resources, teacher and governors training. In the summer term of 2019 a school council audit was conducted and completed by all eight secondary schools on behalf of the Local Authority.
- 2.4** The reshape has enabled the service to be more flexible and able to respond to need. A good example of this is work with young people aged 18 plus. The service recognised that the group had additional needs that were not being met effectively in a youth club setting. In order to meet their needs, a new project has been developed which provides additional support and opportunities for this particular age group of young people.
- 2.5** The service runs a variety of activities during school holidays. A successful project was delivered during February Half Term where 84 young people were engaged in positive wellbeing activities including opportunities to gain accreditation in Digital Media, Substance Misuse and Level 2 Food Safety.
- 2.6** The Welsh Government Youth Support Grant has provided additional funding for wellbeing activities this year. This has allowed the team to employ two further youth engagement workers and develop a number of new initiatives including

'Gloves in the Gym, Knives in the bin' which supports 45 young people in a boxing led project, consultation and development work with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people, and wellbeing after school clubs in four schools across the county.

2.7 The Urdd are providing school support and informal social opportunities to speak Welsh. 220 young people accessed Welsh language provision in 2018/19.

2.8 The service supported the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales (BGCW) to access £60,000 of funding from the Creative Rural Communities grant to provide rural communities with increased opportunities for young people to access youth activities services and support.

2.9 The service has recently commissioned the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services (CWWYS) to undertake research with voluntary youth organisations working in the Vale, in order to identify support required and further partnership opportunities. This will identify those that we can support and potentially engage with in order to take advantage of training and other opportunities which will enhance the provision and support for youths across the Vale of Glamorgan.

2.10 Following priority changes to Families First grants, the Youth Wellbeing Team were formed to provide mentoring support to young people referred who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This service has been operational for 18 months and has worked with 280 children and young people between 2019-2020. During this period, staff completed 1,244 individual one to one mentoring sessions including 184 drop-in sessions across schools, lunch times, wellbeing in the outdoors, physical activity and much more. Of the referrals, 29 of these were either children who were educated other than at school (EOTAS) or non-attenders, and 48 of these had multiple needs (considered as having 3 or more ACEs).

2.11 The I2A Programme continues to be successful across secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. The outcomes for the project include:

- Further Education and Training outcome – currently 123% above profile
- Qualifications outcome – currently 57% towards target
- Reduced Risk of NEET outcome - currently 78% towards target

2.12 It is worth highlighting that the lead beneficiary Newport is content with progress and we are confident that we will reach the target successfully.

2.13 The I2W Programme is currently 25% above profile which means an additional 36 young people (to date). The outcomes for the project include:

- Further Education and Training outcome – currently 129% above profile
- Qualification Outcomes – currently 216% above profile
- Employment Outcomes currently 97% above target

- 2.14** The number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training in Year 11 reduced from 1% in 2017 to 0.5% in 2018. This is significantly below the Welsh average of 1.6%. The Local Authority is ranked first position for having the lowest percentage of NEET young people in Wales, compared to third lowest Local Authority last year. Year 12 NEET figures have reduced from 0.6% in 2017 to 0.4% in 2018. Again, this is below the Welsh average of 0.7%, however the Vale's ranking fell to 7th position compared to 5th position in 2017. Year 13 NEET figures have reduced greatly from 2.85% in 2017 to 1.55% in 2018. This remains below the Welsh average of 2.53% and places the Vale in 4th position compared to 13th in 2017.
- 2.15** In 2019-2020, in addition to the Youth Support Grant, there was additional finance provided by Welsh Government to support young people identified as at risk of Youth Homelessness. A number of interventions have since been introduced in partnership with housing and housing providers Llamau and as a result, 28 young people at risk of homelessness have been supported on a one to one basis with engagement staff to stay in education, employment and training and prevent home breakdown, family conflict and potential risks of homelessness.
- 2.16** In addition to the new engagement staff, Llamau have agreed to deliver training to professionals and young people to inform them of 'youth homelessness' and where they are able to access support. This will develop during 2020-2021 and we aim to engage at least 2000 young people and a range of professionals.
- 2.17** The Youth Engagement Programme (YEP), based in Barry YMCA, continues to support young people with a PSE curriculum as part of the Y Daith education offer. Alongside supporting 10 KS3 or KS4 pupils each day, the team also provides wellbeing and nurture support for 3 to 4 learners each day as part of on-going informal education, helping them to deal with the issues they face. All of these students are at high risk of becoming NEET and will have experienced multiple ACEs.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Reducing the percentage of young people from becoming NEET is set out in the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and the Welsh Government Child Poverty Strategy. It helps support the national and local indicator of percentage of young people in education, employment or training, under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- 3.2** The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Corporate Plan outlines a clear link to education and reducing the number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training, that's set out in well-being outcome 3 'An Inspirational and Culturally

Vibrant Vale' and - objective 5, 'Raising overall standards of achievement'. This objective contributes to the wellbeing goals of a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and a globally responsible Wales.

- 3.3** The variety of provision continues to develop with a wide range of offers from alternative education providers, vocational learning with progression routes, tailored support, and information and guidance. This should help learners explore their interests and realise their potential. We are proud to be offering a wide range of subject pathways through our partners that will help inspire young people to fulfil their potential.
- 3.4** Improving standards of alternative education provision is important to us and we want to ensure that provision is quality assured through regular contracts management meetings with the providers. The process ensures we monitor the progress of learners. Monitoring is undertaken to make certain that learners are receiving value for money and that provision has a positive impact on young people's education and wellbeing.
- 3.5** We work collaboratively with internal and external partners that include agencies, education and training providers, Careers Wales and Welsh Government, to help meet the well-being objective.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** The Youth Service received £411, 586 from the Welsh Government Youth Support Grant 2019/20. Indicative allocations from Welsh Government for 2020/21 have recently been received and remain unchanged from last year.
- 4.2** European Social Fund (ESF) is confirmed until December 2022. However, with a potential underspend within ESF, there may be an opportunity to re-profile and attract additional funding before project end. The total cost of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects Inspire to Achieve (I2A) and Inspire to Work (I2W) for the Vale is £1,671,743. The percentage of grant funding income received is £716,513. This funding is from 1st April 2016 to 31st December 2022 for the I2A project and from the 1st April 2017 to 31st December 2022 for the I2W project.
- 4.3** Families First Funding will form part of the wider Children and Communities Grant (CCG) and require regular monitoring and performance reviews as part of results-based accountability (RBA) to ensure we continue to receive this to impact the wellbeing agenda.

Employment

- 4.4** Welsh Government Youth Support Grant 19/20 provided funds to employ 5 additional youth engagement workers this year, 3 within youth homelessness and 2 within youth health and wellbeing. Next year, this has been agreed in principle, so managers are currently working with partners to increase services and support available.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.5** The Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service's use of the ONE management information service ensures we monitor equality of access to open access and targeted intervention opportunities being delivered. We share this data with equalities teams to monitor interventions and in areas of need the service may adapt to cater for this- for example we have seen a need for an LGBTQ+ provision as part of the reshape so this year we have taken many steps in consultation with the community and over half term we will be developing this offer to this community.

5. Background Papers

N/A