

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL****CABINET****08 November 2022****Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services****Part 1- Public****Executive Non Key Decisions****1 REVIEW OF SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT****Summary**

**This report outlines services provided by the Council in relation to Sports Development and Youth Engagement, providing Cabinet the opportunity to review and advise on future levels of service provision.**

**1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 Sports Development and Youth Engagement are discretionary services primarily provided through the Leisure Services Events and Partnerships team. A full review of both these service areas was included within a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 June 2018 and the following recommendations were agreed by Cabinet and subsequently implemented:

*The Committee concluded that the services supported the Council's key priorities, offered value for money, attracted investment into the Borough and, in addition to a direct level of income, provided broader economic, health and social benefits.*

*It was, therefore recommended that:*

*(1) the contribution made by the Council's delivery of Youth Engagement, Sports and Events Services to the achievement of its strategic objectives be acknowledged;*

*(2) the suggested changes to the existing delivery arrangements, as outlined in the report and at Annexes 1 to 3, be agreed; and*

*(3) the associated savings of £14,940 to the Council's Annual Revenue Budget be included and reflected in the 2018/19 Revised Revenue Budgets.*

**1.2 Current Service Provision**

- 1.2.1 Since the previous review of these services the Council's financial position has worsened and following a request by Cabinet a further review of the service areas is felt appropriate due to their discretionary nature. This will allow Cabinet to review current provision, comment on future delivery, and revise revenue

estimates accordingly. Details of both service areas can be found at **Annex 1** (Sports Development) and **Annex 2** (Youth Engagement). In summary, the Annexes detail the purpose of service, how it is currently delivered and staffing and budget resources. The general areas of work delivered are highlighted below:

- Sports Development (Discovery Days for young people with special needs, Support and advice to Parish/Town Councils, Support and Advice to Local Clubs, Liaison with the Tonbridge Sports Association, Liaison with the Council's OneYou team, partnership with Active Kent and monitoring of community use agreements);
- Youth Engagement (Y2Crew, Youth Forum, Signposting youth activities for school holiday periods, provision of Leisure Pass to provide access to youth activities by external providers).

1.2.2 Whilst it is recognised that some excellent work is being undertaken by the Borough Council, it is also relevant to note that the current level of service provision is relatively small, and the provision of youth services formally rests with Kent County Council. There are a significant number of alternative providers serving the needs of both service areas including KCC, the Leisure Trust, schools, clubs, charities and the private sector. KCC Youth Services provide a range of services including youth hubs, help and advice, online services, the Try Angle awards and signposting to activities. The Leisure Trust has an outreach programme including a range of activities such as girls running groups, walking football and netball, guided walks and multi activity sessions. In addition, the Trust operate holiday clubs, coaching sessions and age group specific membership packages. The Council has Service Level Agreements in place to support community development in Trench and East Malling which includes youth engagement and support via the Community worker for each area. These agreements are separate from this review. Members may therefore wish to reconsider the Council's involvement in sports development and youth engagement taking this into account, and also bearing in mind the Council's overall financial position. If Cabinet did wish to move in this direction, there are some elements of the current service provision that will require consideration due to specific implications. These are listed below together with the reasons.

1.2.3 The Council's Leisure Pass scheme covers this Council's Leisure facilities and activities. In addition, the Events and Partnerships team extend this to external providers, providing a discounted fee to enable participation primarily in the school holidays to young people. Currently there are 2855 active leisure passes, with each pass able to support a family requiring financial assistance to access provision, while generating additional income into service providers.

- Removal of the scheme to external providers may result in those current and future Leisure Pass Members and families no longer being able to afford to access leisure provision outside of the council's own facilities and the associated benefits to their physical and mental health.

1.2.4 Provision of the Y2crew diversionary activity scheme. This provides targeted support and diversionary activities for young people in partnership with KCC. The scheme is supported by the Community Safety Partnership with youth diversion featuring in the Partnership Plan and the Y2Crew listed as an action for the forthcoming year under the Safeguarding Vulnerable People priority. Withdrawal of the scheme would result in less diversionary activities and engagement with vulnerable young people. During 2021/22 48 young people attend the scheme with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour over the summer holiday period. It is suggested the scheme be reviewed by the CSP.

1.2.5 Monitoring of Community Use Agreements which are established where the Council invest in facilities for the community to ensure that facilities are managed appropriately with partners.

Removal of the monitoring of Community Use Agreements is not possible as it forms part of the agreement to grant schemes provision and to protect the public funds invested.

1.2.6 Engagement with Young People through the Youth Forum to inform the Council's plans and decision-making process in line with Section 11 of the Children Act, Safeguarding Young People and ensuring that the 'voice of the child' is listened to. Recently this has been used as part of the Local Plan consultation.

Removal of the Youth Forum would require alternative methods of consultation with Young People to inform Council plans and decisions to comply with legislation. KCC operate the Kent Youth Council which young people from the borough can join providing an alternative means of consultation.

1.2.7 Partnership with Active Kent to provide support for sport and activity in the Borough including funding for development and training for Safeguarding etc.

*Removal of the funding for this partnership (£3k) would result in grants and support no longer being available to teams and individuals in the Borough. Currently all districts in the county fund the partnership.*

1.2.8 Activity and Sport liaison for providers, Parish/ Town Council's and individuals giving advice on issues related to development and training as well as safeguarding, such as that shown during the recent pandemic. Provision and maintenance of the Club directory, providing signposting to opportunities for engagement for residents, highlighted as being an increased requirement as a result of the pandemic particularly for younger people.

Removal of this support and guidance would result in alternative avenues of guidance and information being sought which are less available and more generic.

1.2.9 It is also important that when considering any reduction in services a full Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken and also any impact on existing staff. Both these issues are addressed later in this report.

### **1.3 Financial and Value for Money considerations**

- 1.3.1 A copy of the revenue budget for both service areas is attached at **Annex 3**. With regard to any change in service provision that Cabinet may recommend, savings would be achievable in regard to direct budget allocation. It would be anticipated that some staff savings could also be achieved.

### **1.4 Staffing Implications**

- 1.4.1 The extent of any potential staffing implications will be dependent on the recommendations made by Cabinet. Following liaison with the Head of HR & Development, if any staff are put at risk of redundancy, in accordance with the Council's Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Policy and Procedure every effort will be made to re-deploy those selected for redundancy into other jobs that become vacant within the Council. In accordance with the Reorganisation, Redundancy and Redeployment Policy and Procedure a series of engagement and (if necessary) consultation meetings will be arranged with any potential staff member who may be at risk of redundancy.
- 1.4.2 Any unavoidable future redundancy cost will be met from the Council's reserves.

### **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 The Agreement with Active Kent can be terminated by either partner.
- 1.5.2 The provision of both service areas is discretionary. With regards to safeguarding the lead responsibility for managing child and adult protection lies with KCC which retains the coordinating role and duty of enquiry. However, it is recognised that successful safeguarding responses need multi agency and multi disciplinary working and the Council will work with partners to identify and respond to suspected abuse.
- 1.5.3 Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004. places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

### **1.6 Equality Impact Assessment Section**

- 1.6.1 Any proposed reduction in service levels would require the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment. An EQIA has been prepared and is included at **Annex 4** should Cabinet wish to reduce the provision of sport and youth services.

#### **Policy Considerations**

- 1.6.2 Healthy Lifestyles, Young People, Safeguarding Children Framework, Communications and Community.

## **1.7 Recommendations**

- 1.7.1 Cabinet is requested to review current service provision of sports development and youth engagement and make recommendations for the future.

The Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

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