

Frequently Asked Questions

What is youth work?

- Youth work is where youth workers, work with young people in their leisure time to deliver a programme of personal social education in a fun and exciting way.
- The youth workers, who can be paid or are volunteers, are offered suitable training and support, starting with level 1 senior member training, through to level 3 part-time youth work qualifications and on to a degree for the professional staff. We also recommend that all youth club sessions have staff with appropriate other qualifications like first aid, safeguarding and activity specific qualifications like food hygiene if cooking, mountain leader if taking young people in the mountains etc.
- A lot of people see youth clubs as a place where young people go to play and socialise, which is the case. However they then build quality relationships with appropriate adults who are there for them when young people need it. It might be something as simple as help writing a job application or planning an activity, to work around relationships (with their peers, partners, parents and teachers), all the way to helping and supporting young people through life changing events (for example divorce, being taken into care, bereavement, criminal behaviour, alcohol and drug use).

What does the youth service currently deliver?

The service currently delivers five types of work:

- Direct delivery: 47 youth sessions every week where paid staff run them.
- We second a small team to Shropshire Youth Association who in turn provide support to approximately 100 voluntary sessions.
- We support the Members of Youth Parliament, who hold the democratic mandate to represent young people strategically in Shropshire.
- We bid for and deliver youth work in Shropshire for other organisations, like National Citizenship Service, Young Health Champions, Short Breaks (for disabled young people), detached youth work for the CAP (Community Alcohol Project), parish councils and social landlords. Currently this income is in excess of £200,000 per annum.
- Fund local youth organisations both at county level and to individual clubs, such as the Scouts, Guides, Young Farmers and The Hive, through grants arrangements and a youth activities fund.

What is a youth club session?

- A youth club session is when we deliver a programme of youth activities. It might be delivered in one of our youth centres, a hired building or in a public venue.
- Often these sessions are targeted to a specific age group, area, gender or identifiable group (e.g. young disabled people).

What is a “Local Area Youth Board” (LAYB)?

- We are currently seeking people’s views on the setting up of Local Area Youth Boards to be in place by 1 April 2015 to cover all of Shropshire. How many of these there will be will depend on the outcome of another consultation to determine the future of youth provision in Shropshire. This consultation finishes on 31 March 2014.
- A Local Area Youth Board is a small group of people who represent the area. It is made up of at least one Shropshire councillor, young people (at least half of the

group), local youth leaders who support them, parish and/or town councillors and other key partners in the area.

- They will use their local knowledge to identify what youth provision and activities are needed in the area and work towards finding ways to deliver these.
- The boards will have a small amount of money from Shropshire Council to buy services and activities on behalf of young people. It is hoped that they will be able to attract money from other sources to increase the funding available.
- The LAYB will be supported by a youth worker from the Youth Service (Positive Activities Team) who will take responsibility for arranging meetings, ensuring a cross section of young people sit on the board and that minority groups like young carers, looked after children, and young people from ethnic minority cultures are represented. They will be responsible for issues around duty of care, safeguarding and will also administer the budget on behalf of the LAYB within Shropshire Council's financial systems.
- Young people from the LAYB will also operate a peer inspection system to ensure that the quality of provision in an area is of high quality.

Why a minimum of 50 per cent young people on the LAYB?

- The provision of youth work is set out in statute and requires that young people play an active role in the commissioning of services. By stating that the LAYB has a minimum of 50 per cent young people guarantees that we meet this statutory requirement.

What is the budget and how is it spent?

- The Positive Activities budget for 2014/15 is approximately £900,000 from the council and a further £230,000 from external contracts.
- The percentage of expenditure of the core £900,000 is:
 - 15 per cent on supporting the voluntary sector.
 - 15 per cent on buildings.
 - 21 per cent on infrastructure costs (includes: staff and office costs).
 - Three per cent on transport costs (includes staff travel, minibus hire and running our two mobile youth centres).
 - Three per cent on Members of Youth Parliament.
 - Three per cent on training.
 - **40 per cent on direct delivery of youth club sessions (this includes part-time staff, activities, equipment and transport). It is this element that is being consulted upon.**

The additional £230,000 generated by the team is to deliver specific work for the National Citizen Service, Young Health Champions, Short Breaks, and the community Alcohol Project.

How have we chosen what stays open?

- The youth club sessions that will stay open will be those that operate in the most deprived areas of Shropshire, that currently have lots of young people attending.
- Our bespoke sessions for disabled young people will stay open.
 - Our proposals seek to reduce the support provided to the Smile+ youth group that was established last year for young people with learning difficulties from the age of 18 to their 25th birthday. The club was established with the intention that it would become a voluntary club. We are establishing a management committee and seeking volunteers to take this over. The

building and equipment will continue to be given free of charge to the club for at least another year.

- We will continue to support the once a month club for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people.
- There is clear national evidence that young people in these categories need additional help and support to achieve positive outcomes in their lives. They are also likely to pose greater challenges for adults working with them. Therefore paid youth workers are used to support them.
- Your feedback will help us to use the money and staff we have well in local areas.

How much money will these changes save?

- We have to save 15 per cent of our current budget. This equates to around £140,000 for 2014/15.

How many young people attend youth club sessions?

- Typically, directly delivered youth club sessions have attendance of between 30 and 100 young people per night depending on the size and location of buildings.
- In 2012/13 the council's Youth Service, known as "The Positive Activities Team" provided activities for 4,258 young people weekly across Shropshire.
- This figure increases to 11,190 once voluntary organisations, such as the Scouts, Guides, Young Farmers and The Hive are included.
- Total current engagement stands at roughly 44 per cent of Shropshire's young people (aged 10 to 16). In the current model, Positive Activities Team footfall is 133,954 visits per year, rising to 432,175 visits when including our voluntary sector partners; together we delivered approximately 864,350 activities in 2012/13.

Why two consultations?

- Two things are happening at the same time.
 - As a result of budget reductions and voluntary redundancies starting in April 2014 we have to operate a reduced level of council run youth services during the year. We have suggested three different ways of offering services (they all cost the same) and have invited people to suggest a fourth option. If you would like to help us shape our delivery during 2014 please visit: www.surveymonkey.com/s/YouthClubSessions2014to2015
 - From April 2015, following redesign activity during 2014, it is proposed that an organisation or organisations other than the council will deliver youth services in the county, as Shropshire Council becomes a commissioning authority. At this time, further savings will be necessary alongside the need to explore new ways to deliver the service. In order to undertake this process we are asking the public, young people and partners to help us design new ways of working which address local needs before other youth service providers are selected. If you would like to help us shape youth provision beyond April 2015 by getting involved now, please visit: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/youth-activities>

What will happen during April 2014?

- During term time we will offer youth club members a variety of trips and visits while we reorganise.
- During the Easter break we will run the National Citizenship service and Short breaks trips for disabled young people as usual.

How can we keep youth club sessions that are due to close, open?

- The sessions that are due to close are all run by paid staff and running costs met by Shropshire Council, there are a number of ways these clubs could be maintained:
 - Volunteers could come forward to take over the running of the sessions. These people will be given support and training by Shropshire Youth Association staff.
 - Alternative external funding can be secured to continue to pay youth workers to run the sessions (although Shropshire Council staff have left through voluntary redundancy, new staff can be recruited).
 - Please add your thoughts in option 4 of the survey.

What will happen to the youth club sessions after April 2015?

- Shropshire Council is currently consulting upon the future of youth provision in Shropshire after 2015. The result of this consultation will help shape the council's commissioning intentions for youth activities.
- The council is facing ongoing budget reductions and the youth service will be further reduced in future years.

Have you done an Equalities Impact Needs Assessment (EINA)?

- Yes one has been completed.
- We will continue to review this and will update as well as at the end of the consultation.