

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS SCRUTINY REVIEW BOARD

5 February 2024

Minute Extract

35/23 Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23

The Board considered a report from the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care which provided an update on the Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23.

The Derby Youth Alliance (DYA) was created by Derby's Stronger Communities Board. Members work together to reduce risk and improve wellbeing and services for young people in a collaborative and constructive way.

The focus of the DYA was around the needs of vulnerable and challenged young people and deprived communities. During 2022-23 funding came through grants from Derby Homes, Derby City Council and Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing. A Mentoring Project was part-funded through DYA partners. The DYA prioritised tackling issues affecting young people including abuse and exploitation, alcohol, and drug use amongst others.

An overview of DYA referrals was provided. The referrals come from Derby City Council, Primary and Secondary Schools and Derby Homes. There were 113 referrals, these were broken down into postcode, ethnicity, age, Special Educational Needs, and gender.

The officer described some DYA partner led projects:

Future Leaders Project Survey- participants of this programme prepared questions for Derby's young people, the aim was to make a better connection between Derby's Shopping Centre and disruptive youth. Results showed a need for a range of affordable and safe youth activities to be provided in the city. Young people felt they had nowhere to go, nothing to do and a lack of funding to access opportunities.

Elite Programme – The DYA were asked by an Academy school for help to support seven year 6 pupils who were hard to engage with. The school wanted provision of targeted intervention and wraparound support for the pupils during the summer term, school holidays and the lead up to moving to secondary school. Classroom and physical activities were provided for the pupils, day trips and outings took place during the summer break. The feedback was positive, and it was planned to further promote the programme.

Derbion – Concern about the shopping centre and the surrounding area had been raised. The DYA were asked to engage with young people during the 6-week summer period and advise on improving the current

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situation. Issues such as anti-social behaviour from young people aged between 11-16 years, damage to car parks, drug use, and the issues were spreading to the bus station and river gardens.

Other Partner Led Projects included the Schools Development Support Agency which was to support vulnerable pupils at risk of becoming not in education or training post 16. There were also Inspire and Innovate Projects which provided activity sessions and mentoring for younger people, with 9 groups being funded in 2022-23.

Children and Young People's Network (CYPN), meetings are held bi-monthly for strategic partners and the wider network of professional who work with children and young people. There are 80 organisations represented.

The Board thanked the officer for the report, and the impressive range of activities available were noted. Some possible improvements to representation of young people in the Annual Report were suggested. The officer thanked the Board for their comments some of which could be incorporated into next year's report.

The Board asked about engagement of young people (YP). They asked the officer to describe the work the DYA does to hear from children who are reluctant to provide feedback. The officer explained that the DYA work with children who were not in the mainstream areas. Surveys are circulated to all the organisations that are a part of the Youth Alliance, QR codes are also used. Schools and specific groups are contacted and asked for their views on how to do things better. One of the DYA partner organisations had undertaken surveys with young people as a part of workshop sessions.

The officer highlighted that life for young people today was hard, there are a lot of challenges such as deprivation, poverty, poor life expectancy. Families are doing the best they can for children in the circumstances. The Board were informed that several large local companies in the city were involved with and supported the programmes, projects and activities run by Youth Alliance.

The Board asked how help was allocated to YP. The officer explained that the referrer was asked to complete forms, giving information about hobbies and other areas indicating what they are interested/not interested in. Each application was individually dealt with and organisations which were best placed to support the young person were allocated. Community Action receive all referrals and they check with the information with the referring organisation. The officer agreed to provide information on where the referrals were signposted to, for example how many were sent to Safe and Sound.

The Board asked if DYA were pro-actively searching for YP to join activities or if YP could access their base from the street. They learnt

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that the DYA were pro-active about projects for YP, but not for individual referrals as there were already too many. There were not many off-the-street referrals, so far, they had only 2 self-referrals from YP. There was a website in place now, and this was being publicised. However, there was still work to do on communications, and it was suggested a Social Media aspect could be managed by YP. The Board heard that the Safe and Sound were currently progressing a city-based location for the service which will open access opportunities for YP.

The Board asked what information was available for YP who currently don't present to the DYA. The Board suggested that signposting was not in place and early intervention for children was needed. The current position of provision in the city was needed to identify any gaps, and they asked what was being done in terms of mapping activities. The officer clarified that work had begun on this by the DYA, once it had been completed it would be brought to other agencies for input. The board agreed to look to planning a workshop for statutory and voluntary organisations to collectively look for any gaps.

The Board sought clarification on funding arrangements for the YA now and in the long term. It was explained that the position was on a year-by-year basis.

The Board resolved:

- 1. To note the Report**
- 2. That Cabinet support the Youth Alliance with their mapping exercise and potential future workshops across agencies within the Council and beyond.**
- 3. That the Youth Alliance Annual Evaluation 2022-23 be circulated to all Councillors so that they are aware of the provision available for children and young people in the city.**
- 4. When funding opportunities are available Cabinet should consider a tender process for local service providers in the city before tendering to service providers outside of the city.**