

Comments on Management response to Aspect Union paper on the funding reductions to the Youth Service

In terms of understanding the management responses to the three different proposals put forward through Aspect), Unite and Unison there are some new key developments that were not part of the original proposals.

- It seems that the whole service response presented by Aspect (Final version emailed to [REDACTED] on 13.1.14 for circulation to L2) has been misunderstood in terms of the amount of money proposed to be saved.

Whole Service Aspect Proposal:

This proposal identifies 25% (£1m) reduction in the overall budget to be implemented from April 2014. Savings are to be made during the financial year 2014 -2015.

Management Commentary:

The proposal set out by the trade union ASPECT is to make a reduction of 15% to the youth service budget in 2014/15 and 2016/17. It does not set out how this would be achieved and it sets out the risks to the service if it was reduced.

Within the Aspect response (Doc V5iii) there is a clear definition of which staff would be remaining, their roles and the approaches that would be adopted in order to secure the savings and the roles. It clearly set out how the £1m will be found and the accompanying Impact Assessment paper clearly identified the risks to young people, communities and the Bradford District, if the Labour Executive proposal was to be implemented at 79% cut to the Youth Service.

- ***Management's response***

The proposals will not meet the required savings.

The savings suggested by the Aspect paper is that there should not be a reduction of the Youth Service budget beyond the £1 million in year one.

The Youth Service has already sustained significant budget cuts amounting to £1.7 million over the last 3 years (Which equates to nearly a third of the Youth Service budget).

Equally the Impact Assessment document supplied talks about risks to the service and to geographic communities and particularly vulnerable groups of young people if the cuts were deeper than the £1million.

The Aspect proposal safeguards essential and effective prevention and early intervention services, maximises resources across the District and builds the

capacity of young people and communities to develop more sustainable models of youth work delivery for the future.

We understood that the Schools Forum was to be approached to see if any funding support could be provided for services being reduced within children's services, particularly for Early Years and for Youth Work.

What was the outcome of these discussions with the Schools Form?

- The initial proposal by the Executive gave a clear indication that the Youth Service would in effect remain as a Youth Service and be project managed towards new management arrangements within Neighbourhood Services by April 2015.

Management's response is that to implement the Executive proposals in full it would require moving to the new proposed structure within Neighbourhood Services as soon as possible. This would give half year effect in 2014/15 and full year effect in 2015/16. Can Management elaborate on this? What does it mean in practice as this is a significant change from the original proposal?

This appears to be a different position and is difficult to understand without any context of the reasoning behind what appears to be a shorter timeline for the management of the Youth Service and transfer of staff to Neighbourhood Services. The Labour Executive proposal only required a saving of £1m in 2014/15 which has been identified. Why is there a need to bring in additional savings by September 2014?

- The shortened timeline and a different approach to future arrangements suggested by the management response means there is now the need for the focus of project planning for the future to be re-clarified and probably altered. This will need to be done quite soon in order to provide a clear steer to the three remaining Youth Service SMT members, identified to deliver the transition work during 2014/15.
- It is difficult to understand the differences between the management position expressed in their response to Aspect and the other 2 Unions, UNITE and Unison and that by the elected members through the Labour Executive, who made the original proposals in terms of management moving to Neighbourhood Services. Through staff consultations within the Youth Service, there is a strongly held view that the management of Youth Service should remain in Children's Services due to its informal education role of contributing positively to educational attainment and achievement of young people in the Bradford District and that the Service is currently already devolved to Area Committees and works very closely with Neighbourhood Services, Local Elected Members and youth providers.
- Transferring the staff and management to Neighbourhood Services will not add any additional benefits to the Youth Service and in effect could be quite detrimental. *Management has not commented on this in their response.*

- Some clarification would be useful in order to understand the ongoing role of Youth Service SMT and the wider staffing team roles. Equally significantly is what are the purpose and functions of both the future roles of staff and the service as a whole. From initial reading of the management response, the absence of this information does not allow for a considered planning process to take place against a shared view.
- To have this clarity of purpose could give the potential buy in of staff needed for the future – although the clear indications of the overwhelming majority of youth work staff (who are in Unite) is that they do not want to be part of Neighbourhood Services. The only Union supporting the move to Neighbourhood Services is Unison. Both UNITE and Aspect would like it to remain in Children’s Services in either Access and Inclusion or Education Improvement.
- It is important that the whole management approach to moving the service to Neighbourhood Services is handled sensitively and properly over the length of 2014/15. This will be as much about continuing the existing youth work and managing changes in a responsive and timely manner by trusted managers to the end of March 2015.
- In the event of the 79% reduction to the Service being agreed on the 20th February, a measured, well thought through and shared approach to meeting the reductions on the scale suggested by the Labour Group proposals can be drawn together throughout 2014/15 and be ready to be implemented in April 2015 – this would be based on shared principles about securing a baseline of provision across the Bradford District with a Youth Service, that can be grown overtime, where we are able to secure additional funding for work with young people. Youth Service SMT and staff have already considered its response in the event of a 79% reduction being agreed on the 20th February 2014 and what a Youth Service with a £800k budget could look like and how it could be delivered across the Bradford District (Paper attached as Yr 2 proposals)

24 Jan 2014

Aspect-NAYCEO

Management Response to the response from ASPECT trade union on the Youth Service Budget Reductions 2014/16

This was set out in an email dated the 24th January 2014, received from [REDACTED], Steward. The document is titled ‘Response to mgt – 24.1.14’.

Management’s response

- The issue of the 15% and 25% reduction and how it would be achieved have been covered in management’s revised response to ASPECT.

- The Schools Forum was approached in respect of the budget reductions in Education Services and whether support could be given from the Dedicated Schools Grant. Funding, subject to secretary of State approval was given for Early Years services for one year only. No financial support has been sought or granted for the Youth Service.
- To realise the proposed £3.2m reduction by the end of 2015/16 there would have to be full effect in place by March 2015 to make the £2.2m savings. This would require the implementation of the proposal with immediate effect. This is due to the time required to agree a new structure, interview for the remaining jobs, time to hear appeals, redeployment opportunities to be sought, both in children's and corporately. Staff and managers may decide to apply for Voluntary Redundancy reducing capacity to see through the changes. So the implementation and transfer to the Neighbourhood Service would take place with immediate effect to minimise disruption to the service.
- All Departments have been asked to front load the savings where possible and bring them forward. It is likely to take 6 months to see the structural changes through giving a part year effect to the savings to be realised from staffing reductions. The timeline has not altered.
- ASPECT have set out their view that the Youth Service should remain in Childrens Services due to its informal education role. We note the view that you do not want the Youth service to part of Neighbourhoods. Management's response is that the Executive proposal to move into Neighbourhood Services is based on the following rationale:
 - The Youth Service as part of the Councils devolution agenda is already accountable to Area Committees working closely with Ward Members on local priorities, ward plans and decisions on the Youth Opportunities funding. The move to neighbourhoods will further enhance this joint working arrangement.
 - The aim is for the Youth Service to be more closely aligned, building relationships with young people, schools and communities to encourage volunteering and income generation. There will be opportunities to develop these areas of work by being based and managed as part of the Neighbourhood Service.
 - The Youth Workers in each constituency area will be delivering youth work sessions and responding quickly to emerging local need and priorities.
 - The aim of the proposal is to reduce management and protect front line jobs. There is management capacity in neighbourhoods to integrate youth work provision. This will make savings from management and sustain more youth workers in the constituencies.
- Management have noted ASPECT's comments in respect of implementation. These will be considered once the budget decision has been made and this becomes operational.