

Unite response to Management Equality Impact Assessment on Cuts to the Youth Service

Describe the proposal under assessment and what change it would result in if implemented:

Bradford Youth Service currently employs 70+ FTE Professional Youth Workers as well as a large number of part time staff. The Service currently delivers youth work in every ward across the Bradford and Keighley District and, in the majority of wards a minimum of 3 sessions of youth work are delivered per week. Bradford Youth Service also delivers youth work in schools, detached youth work sessions, holiday activities during every school holiday, special projects such as residentials, arts and sports projects, accredited programmes and one to one support for some of the most vulnerable young people in the District.

Management propose to decrease the number of full time Professional Youth Workers to a total of 10 - 2 in each constituency, which will lead to a dramatic decrease in the amount of youth work provision across the District. In reality, there will be **no youth work provision** in most of the wards in the Bradford and Keighley District.

Management quoted a figure of £12 - £15m that is brought in by the voluntary sector for the delivery of work with young people. Further investigation reveals that this is not actually the case. This figure is a ball park figure that can not be substantiated. Community profiling reveals that, in reality, there are many wards in the District that have **no voluntary sector youth provision**.

Will this proposal advance equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and/or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not? If yes, explain further.

The proposal will have a **negative effect** on young people who share a protected characteristic and also have a **negative effect** on fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not.

Bradford Youth Service currently offers open access youth provision to all young people aged 11 – 19 years (25 years with a disability) and creates regular opportunities to foster community cohesion and equality of opportunity for groups with protected characteristics. Recent consultation with young people that use Youth Service provision reveals that they have had opportunities to meet and make strong relationships with groups of young people that they would have not met had it not been for opportunities and programmes offered by the Youth Service. There is no other youth organization in the Bradford and Keighley District that is able to offer this type of opportunity.

The Youth Service has played a key role in a number of threats to public safety over the last decade including recent far right activity in the city and also during the various disturbances that have taken place in Bradford and Keighley over recent years.

The Youth Service also runs confidential sessions for LGBT young people and sessions for disabled young people.

The movement of the Youth Service into Neighbourhood Support Services will have a

negative effect on the quality of youth work provision throughout the District. There appears to be a lack of understanding and appreciation of the fact that youth work is a profession with youth workers spending a minimum of 3 years studying to degree standard to become a professional youth worker. Youth Work is a profession, the same as social work and teaching and as such, youth workers require professional supervision by line management that understands the unique nature of youth work!

Neighbourhood Support Services undertake an excellent role in terms of the neighbourhood wardens, parking enforcement and street cleaning, however, Unite have serious concerns around the ability of Neighbourhood Support Services to provide adequate or quality supervision to professional youth workers who work with some of the most vulnerable young people in the Bradford & Keighley District!

Without being based in Neighbourhood Support Services, the Youth Service already has strong local connections working closely within neighbourhoods and with a range of organisations. Unite finds it bizarre that Management proposes that a Youth Service that is concerned with the personal and social development of young people and the informal education of young people be moved to a department that has no experience of managing work of this nature! The Youth Service would be the only service for children and young people that stands outside of Children's Services or Education!

Will this proposal have a positive impact and help to eliminate discrimination and harassment against, or the victimization of people who share a protected characteristic?

Unite agrees with management that this proposal will not have a positive impact in helping to eliminate discrimination and harassment/victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic.

Bradford Youth Service currently undertake a vast amount of work fostering good community relations and community cohesion. Youth workers undertake ongoing work in challenging discrimination and promoting tolerance and understanding with young people for all groups of people. The massive reduction to Youth Service provision will most likely **lead to an increase in discrimination/harassment/victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic!**

Will this proposal potentially have a negative or disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic?

This proposal will have a negative and disproportionate impact on young people aged 11 – 19 years (25 years with a disability). Young people have already been hit disproportionately hard over recent years with rising unemployment, the removal of EMA and the spiraling costs of university education. Young people in Bradford are already under-achieving educationally and, according to the Council's own figures, 61% of young people live in low income families and almost a third of young people in Bradford are living in poverty! Over a fifth of young people in Bradford live in workless households!

The radical cuts to the Youth Service will hit the most vulnerable young people of our District the hardest by further decreasing opportunities for young people living in poverty, BME communities, disabled young people, NEET young people and LGBT young people!

This is in stark contract to commitments made by Bradford Council in terms of it's commitment to tackle child poverty!

The Youth Service is currently working with 1490 disabled young people, 4,335 young people who are not White British and 281 young people who are Tier 1 NEET – Tier 1 is relates to the NEET young people with the highest level of need which could be long term unemployment of other complex issues.

Please indicate the level of negative impact on each of the protected characteristics.

Management states that there will be no impact on 'pregnancy and maternity'. This is, in fact, not the case as the Youth Service currently works with pregnant teenagers and teenage parents. The Youth Service is currently working with 35 young people who are pregnant and estimates show that some 68 young people who are pregnant receive services from the Youth Service in any given year.

The Youth Service also undertakes substantial and ongoing preventative work around teenage pregnancy, relationships and sexual health.

What evidence have you used to back up this assessment?

Unite notes that Management's answer to the above question is 'n/a' – not applicable. The Council's own guidance states that:

"The Equality Duty must be complied with **before** and at the time that a particular policy is under consideration or decision is taken .."

The guidance also states,

"The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind and with conscious and deliberate attention to relevant evidence, including evidence derived from consultation with staff and service users."

Unite has been informed through an OJC2 meeting on 6th February 2014 that no consultation took place with service users or staff in the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment or before the radical cuts to the Youth Service were proposed.

Do you need further evidence?

In the light of the lack of consultation with service users or staff in terms of the Equality Duty, it is clear that further evidence is required as to the effects such radical cuts will have on groups with protected characteristics.

Consultation Feedback

Unite notes that there has been no consultation with affected groups prior to the development of the proposal to make the 79.4% cut to the Youth Service and the provision it offers for young people aged 11- 19 years (25 years with a disability)

Feedback from current consultation

The feedback on the proposed cuts to the Youth Service has been unprecedented with young people organizing themselves to make representation to the Council. It is clear from feedback from young people, their parents and communities that young people want and value the Youth Service and do not support the current proposals to cut the Youth Service by 79.4%.

Young people have stated that the cuts will lead to young people being literally thrown out onto the streets and there will be a subsequent rise in anti-social behavior and crime.

Vulnerable young people have spoken of cuts to the Youth Service leading to their greater isolation and hindering their ability to succeed and advance their own personal circumstances. The Youth Service offers volunteering opportunities and opportunities to develop employability skills.

Some quotes from young people:

“We need a Youth Service, if we don’t have one then where will we go when we need help and advice?”

“Youth Centre is our lifeline without we are nothing”

“I think this will make everything bad now. A lot of this will make young people really bad, they will just get into all sorts of drugs and crime.”

“My youth workers helped help people in my school because when they came into school people became aware of the bad effects of drugs”

“Youth helps you with problems”

“Where are we meant to go if you close us down. This youth club is keeping me off the streets”

“A warm place to go, otherwise I would be on the streets getting into trouble drunk. I don’t get bullied as much thanks to the work at the youth club.”

“Youth club has helped me with my education and writing my c.v, jobs, careers, drugs awareness, condoms and sexual health”

“We want more nights”

“Youth Service should be open more, especially in the evenings, more sessions, because kids go into wrong causes, drugs, messing about.”

“They should have more youth services”

The youth centre is keeping me off the street and not to be causing any trouble. Its fun here. The youth workers make me make some good decisions.”

“I would like more activities in the area and don’t close the Youth Service”

“I have not been smoking ganja because of coming here”

“Youth club is only thing what stops us doing our community any harm.”

“I think that the cuts to the Youth Service will create more crime and vandalism in the surrounding areas.”

“There will be more crime and more drugs, more fighting”

“If cuts are made to Youth Services, it will only increase crime and anti social behavior because you are taking away places for young people to go and feel safe.”

“I think its stupid closing youth clubs, there is barely anything to do for young people as it is. Whoever has decided to close youth clubs has not thought about it that much, without youth clubs there will be more young people on the street causing trouble. Since being at a youth club I’ve calmed down and been able to learn and achieve new things they do not know how much youth clubs mean to us young people, they need to look at it from our point of view no one cares about young people any more ...”

“..... this youth centre helps bring the community together and help them ...”

“It will affect young people if youth clubs are closed because if they have trouble at home they won’t get the help and support they need”

“MORE FACILITIES FOR THE YOUTH”

“If we didn’t have a Youth Service then we would just be forced on the streets ..”

“The Youth Service have helped me befriend many people and keeps us out of bother”

“If the Youth Service has to shut down then drug abuse alcohol abuse will increase and so will teenage pregnancy”

“I don’t want my youth club to close as it helps me and has helped with problems I couldn’t tell anybody”

Young people want and need Youth Service provision in their own communities.

Departmental response to this feedback – include any changes made to the proposal as a result of the feedback.

Contrary to assertions made by Management that young people will be able to travel to one of 2 youth provisions in Bradford and Keighley, **young people will not be able to travel.** As previously discussed, the Youth Service works with a large number of young people from low income backgrounds who will not have access to the funds necessary

for transport costs. There are also additional considerations in terms of safety and younger people (11 years upwards) travelling unaccompanied throughout the District, particularly in the light of rising CSE concerns in the District.

There will most definitely be an adverse effect on young people aged 11 – 12 years as, contrary to Management assertions, the Youth Service is currently working with some 1,303 young people who are aged 11 – 12 years. This is also the age that young people transfer from primary to secondary school and not 12 – 13 years as stated by Management.

Management states that there will be local provision run by the voluntary and community sector. Unite requires more information on this as this is currently not the case and Unite is hard pressed to see where this will come from with no additional monies being available and severe cuts to youth service budgets being made.

Management talks of targeting groups of young people for youth provision to the most vulnerable groups. This, coupled with crippling budget cuts will decrease any opportunities to “foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not”.

Conclusion

It is clear that no consultation was undertaken with service users in terms of informing the Equality Impact Assessment prior to the proposal being made to radically cut the Youth Service. Unite feels that ‘due regard’ has not been made to service users with protected characteristics.

Since the proposals have been made public, feedback from young people, their parents and communities has been unprecedented. Unite suggests that ‘due regard’ is made to feedback received from young people regarding the cuts. If decision makers do not listen to the feedback from consultation, then consultation becomes a mere paper exercise and the Council’s consultation exercises will be seen by the public of Bradford as a mere ‘tick boxing’ exercise!

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO UNITE FEEDBACK ON THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON THE YOUTH SERVICE PROPOSAL (C27)
(RECEIVED ON THE 17 FEBRUARY 2014)**

Young Lives Bradford have, through a snapshot survey, identified a significant amount of voluntary sector provision for children and young people in the district. The proposal creates a post in the Childrens commissioning team to map out exactly where voluntary and other provision is in the district and to identify gaps and priorities to direct the Community Funding Unit budget in the future. This post will also oversee the consistency and youth work delivery in the five constituency areas.

Youth workers will be line managed by the five Area Co-ordinators, they will offer support and supervision based around the two main delivery priorities. Provision will run in two main bases, one in the City and one in Keighley and staff will need to be deployed from all areas to run this provision in the evenings and weekends. The youth workers will also work closely with the Area Committees and local ward members to meet local identified need for young people. No-one working with vulnerable children is left unsupported – the Child Protection Unit offers advice to all staff who are concerned about a child and there are accessible emotional wellbeing services available to young people in the district. There will be close working with schools and other services as now – this should not be affected by the location of the service in the neighbourhood structure.

The 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.

The EIA will be reviewed in light of the information regarding the number of pregnant young people the Youth Service works with.

The Youth Service age range is 13-19 and this range will be the focus of service delivery.

Consultation Process:

The Council has carried out focus groups with people who represent, support, work with or are self-advocates for the following protected characteristics:

- Age - younger people, and older people;
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation & gender reassignment;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion, faith and no-belief;

More than 80 individuals and organisations attended the focus groups.

2½ hour consultation session with the Bradford Youth Development Partnership's Youth Forum was held.

The Leader attended a consultation session at the college arranged by the president of the Student's Union, which was very well attended.

Representations were also made at the Executive meeting in November.

Young People have been very active in using the Council's online form and the Freepost survey form (often collected from Youth Cafés), as well as social media and through their lobbying campaign.

		All	Youth Service specific
Formal Consultation submissions			
	Freepost	2171	1901
	Website form	471	67
	Email	69	31
subtotal		2,711	1,999
Formal Petitions			
	Paper	11,325	2,868
	E-petition	1,221	228
subtotal		12,546	3,096
Lobbying campaign			
	Postcards	361	361
	Photographs	123	123
subtotal		484	484
Grand total		15,741	5,579

Corporate Workforce Equality Impact Assessment

Consultation and review of the Corporate Workforce Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the Council's Budget Proposals and the potential impact on staff has taken place on an ongoing basis with all the Trade Unions.