

Saltash Team For Youth

Report for Policy & Finance Committee meeting on 14 March 2023

The Saltash Team For Youth working group last met on Friday 13 January at The Core. Attended by Matt, Julia and Rachel from STC, Julie from Livewire and Charlotte from The Core.

Below are the notes of the meeting.

1. Updates from The Core and Livewire

1.1 *The Core*. Charlotte reported that there continues to be lots of demand from young people for the activities provided. Lots of regular attendance by young people who are keen to socialise with others. In terms of young people with additional needs, Charlotte has observed that a higher percentage of the older young people (13-18) display ASD behaviours. In terms of future needs, there is a particular need for 1to1 support sessions for young people, particularly for those with SEND. Charlotte intends to increase the climbing wall activity to two nights per week and is working with Chris from Groundwork to make this happen. The Boxing Club continues to need a permanent home but unfortunately Fountain Head House School are unwilling to provide this.

The financial position is relatively stable considering the challenging times we're in. Maintaining the balance of earned / fundraised income is key and Charlotte is in the process of submitting a variety of applications to various sources.

1.2 *Livewire*. Julie reported that, like The Core, there is high demand for Livewire's activities. Their new Fast Fashion programme is proving popular and they are considering staging a fashion show at Livewire to build on this and to give young people an event to focus on putting together. Julie recognises that young people's mental health needs are significant describing it as a 'tip of the iceberg'. Livewire have 8 counsellors in their team providing 1to1 support but they recognise that they are not mental health experts. Unfortunately, they are having to increasingly fill the gap left by the cuts in CAMHS services meaning that qualified mental health workers are often unavailable, which is really challenging particularly when an individual is experiencing a mental health crisis. The team have also noticed an increasing need to feed young people when they attend Livewire, which they are meeting as much as they can with their community kitchen.

The financial position is also relatively stable and it has been heartening to receive donations from individuals together with a recent legacy. Like The Core, preparing fundraising applications takes a lot of time, which is a challenge when you are a small team.

2. Updates from Saltash Town Council

2.1 *Cornwall Council – review of youth provision*. Matt explained that Cornwall Council is carrying out this review. The deadline for responses is Monday 23 January. The review has 3 key aims and the group agreed to address each of these questions at the meeting. Matt will then send our feedback to Sinead at Saltash Town Council for inclusion in the town council's response to Cornwall Council.

The 3 aims, and the working group's response for each, are set out below:

1. To ascertain the current Youth Services across Cornwall including those with Special Educational Needs (SEND).

- There is a wide range of charities and voluntary organisations providing activities for young people in Saltash. This has been built up over many years and is a positive feature of the town.
- ACTION: Charlotte will circulate the list of organisations to the group and Sinead so that she can include it in the town council's response.
- The support from Saltash Town Council, particularly its annual tendering process, and the existence of Saltash Team For Youth and Saltash Youth Council is also a positive feature.

2. To identify gaps in Youth Service provision across Cornwall (place) including those with Special Educational Needs (SEND).

- Whilst young people attending current activities in Saltash will often have additional needs, there are currently not specific, targeted activities in the town for young people with SEND. It was agreed that this is a gap as young people with SEND will have particular needs, which only a suitable skilled / qualified person can provide.
- Workforce recruitment / retention / training. This is a significant issue. Organisations need to recruit and retain more people, both paid and voluntary, to meet the increasing demand for their services. The workforce also need regular training opportunities e.g. safeguarding, gender awareness, LGBTQ+.
- The gap in availability of specialist mental support is a concern. Organisations in Saltash are noticing a significant increase in young people requiring mental health support. This should be provided by specialists like CAMHS who are under considerable pressure and their services have been cut. The group expressed it is not the role of youth workers to fill this gap. Yes, youth workers can provide general support for young people's mental health and wellbeing but they are not specialist mental health workers.

3. To consider and make recommendations on how the Council can contribute and support Youth Provision in Cornwall particularly where a lack of service is identified.

- As above
- And above all else, Cornwall Council must provide a **ringfenced budget for youth provision**, which is needed even more in this challenging time for young people. As was expressed at the meeting in terms of current youth provision: "Cornwall Council take the credit but invest nothing".
- In addition, there needs to be better county wide coordination and support provided by Cornwall Council. In the past, this has been provided by Young People Cornwall but the group were unclear about what its current role is.
- Better county wide coordination would mean organisations are better connected, young people have a pathway and can progress to further activities beyond what they currently do.
- Fundraising capacity. Many organisations are doing their own fundraising. Support from Cornwall Council to help with coordinated applications / fundraising capacity and expertise would be welcomed.

2.2 *Tendering process for professional youth work in 2023 / 24.* Matt outlined the timeline as follows:

Monday 20 March – tender process opens

Friday 14 April at 5pm – deadline for applications

Friday 21 April at 1pm – applications assessed and scored at The Guildhall

Wednesday 10 May – recommendations discussed at Policy & Finance Committee

Thursday 11 May – applicants notified

Matt confirmed that, positively, the 2023 / 24 budget had increased to £55,000, a 10% increase on the 2022 / 23 budget, recognising the importance of this work and the cost-of-living crisis.

Matt, Rachel and Julia reiterated the importance of applications **meeting all the requirements of the tender specification including providing the supporting organisational information / policies**. This is very important as the panel make their assessments based on the information provided on the day. An application will be rejected if the tender requirements aren't met.

3. Date of next meeting

Friday 28 April 2023, 1pm at Livewire.

Cllr Matt Griffiths
13/02/23