

29 June 2016

JNC Youth and Community Workers – Staff Side Claim on Campaign to Defend Youth Services

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The Staff Side of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Youth and Community Workers submitted its pay and conditions claim last month. An element of this claim was that the Employers' Side should "join with staff to mount a strong campaign to defend youth services". An extract from the claim is set out in the report and the views of the CYP Board are sought.

Recommendation

That the Board does not agree to a joint campaign but agrees to consider the current provision and delivery of Youth Services and how this issue can be taken forward.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

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JNC Youth and Community Workers – Staff Side Claim on Campaign to Defend Youth Services

Background

1. The Staff Side of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Youth and Community Workers submitted its pay and conditions claim last month. An element of this claim was that the Employers' Side should "join with staff to mount a strong campaign to defend youth services".

Extract from the Staff Side claim

2. "Staff Side should not need to remind the employers of the importance of youth and community services. Yet recent history of cuts, pay stagnation and calls to abolish the Joint Negotiating Committee strongly imply that that case needs restating.
3. Youth work aims for the social and personal development of young people. It achieves these outcomes through structured, informal educational activities that combine enjoyment, challenge and learning in a safe environment. These services act as an effective investment in our future as well as an educational service that develops young people into adult citizens.
4. While the only 'agenda' of youth work is the personal and social development of young people, youth work contributes towards many wider social goals. Youth services are educational and preventative services that support young people towards better futures of their own choosing.
5. The positive impacts of youth work include:
 - 5.1 improved engagement with school and education;
 - 5.2 a positive impact on the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour amongst young people;
 - 5.3 improvement in the wider learning and social skills of young people and helps to keep young people safe.
6. The positive impacts of youth work make it hugely cost effective in the medium to longer term, as well as being socially beneficial. There is a broad evidence base "highlighting the value of youth work in a wide range of contexts, covering both the intrinsic purpose and process of youth work and its impact on outcomes for young people and on the benefits for their communities". In short, we all benefit and we could benefit yet more if cost-effective investment is made.
7. Yet youth work is being drastically scaled back across the country. The severe and unnecessary spending cuts being imposed on local authorities by central Government are leading to large numbers of job losses and the axing of youth services. This has

meant many young people have lost vital support and services, at a time when they face a relentless assault on their standard of living and future prospects. These cuts are despite the very real and multi-layered positive outcomes for young people and the whole of society from having a properly funded youth service.”

JNC Employer’s Side reference to the CYP Board

8. At the JNC on 15 June, the Employers’ Side (which is chaired by Councillor Perry) stated that it recognised the value and importance of the service and acknowledged the wider contribution the service made to other public policy objectives. However, it also recognised the autonomy of local authorities in determining local priorities in the context of increasing tight financial constraints and the need to protect (as far as possible) statutory services. As in reality any campaign against further cuts would have to focus on local decision-makers who were determining the cuts (either directly or through reduced voluntary sector funding), the Employers’ Side did not consider that such a campaign fell within its locus. However, it did consider that there might be some value in a wider debate within the sector about the importance of the service. It was agreed that a starting point for this could be a discussion at the LGA’s CYP Board. It should be noted that the JNC covers both England and Wales.
9. The Board’s views are sought on how to take this issue forward.

Financial Implications

10. There are no specific additional financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.