

11 January 2022

Youth Services

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

Representatives from the National Youth Agency (NYA) will join today's meeting to give an update on the recent work undertaken by the NYA, including the census and the national youth work curriculum.

Representatives from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will also be joining to discuss the priorities of the new Minister, the youth investment fund, and the plans regarding statutory guidance.

Recommendation/s

Members are recommended to provide feedback on the challenges and opportunities arising for councils regarding youth services and any additional issues following the presentations from NYA and DCMS.

Action/s

Officers will take action as required arising from the discussions.

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Youth Services

Background

1. Members will be aware that funding to youth services by local authorities in England and Wales saw a real terms decline of 70 per cent between 2010/11 and 2018/19. Since 2010/11, youth services such as [youth clubs and youth workers have been cut by 69 per cent](#). More than 4,500 youth work jobs have been cut and 750 youth centres closed.
2. The LGA has a [vision for youth services](#), for all young people to enjoy their lives, reach their full potential and make a good transition to adulthood. This includes six principles of youth services, a desire to see a national strategy for youth services and for councils to have the resources and levers to ensure a strong local offer for young people. The LGA has [produced a series of publications](#) to support councils in this role, such as a guide to engaging young people in commissioning and a framework for outcomes for young people.

Government activity

3. In the October Cabinet reshuffle, Nigel Huddleston MP was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society) which includes; sport, Commonwealth games, tourism, heritage, and, civil society and youth.
4. In 2019, the Government announced the Youth Investment Fund (YIF), a £500m investment into youth services over five years. We understand that this was revised to c.£388m over three years following the October 2021 spending review and is likely to be majority focused on capital projects. The National Citizen Service (NCS) has also had its funding reviewed and will offer a national approach going forward within a reduced funding package. Further detail on the YIF and NCS is to be announced in early 2022.
5. In 2019, the Government also announced a review of the statutory guidance that provides a framework for council delivery and funding of youth work. Due to Covid-19, this work has been delayed. In the [LGA's response to the consultation](#), we said that the existing guidance recognises that local authorities are best placed to work with a range of local public, private and voluntary sector partners and young people to determine the nature and composition of their local youth offer. Strengthening of the statutory guidance should be alongside local flexible decision making and ensuring that councils have sufficient funding to deliver on any increased

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expectations.

6. The Department is re-visiting the statutory guidance and will provide further information on this in early 2022.

National Youth Agency

7. The NYA is the national body for youth work. They offer guidance, support, advice, training, and staff development opportunities for youth workers and youth work organisations. The NYA is also responsible for quality assurance and compliance for all Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) recognised programmes in the country through the Education Training Standards committee. There is LGA representation on the NYA's governance board. NYA has supported the APPG on Youth Affairs which has resulted in a report with key recommendations taken up by government, and core grant funding re-established in the last 3 years for the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) functions.
8. The NYA have provided [advice and guidance to youth services](#) over the past 18 months on working during Covid-19 and implementing national guidance, in partnership with DCMS, a report on [designated safeguarding leads in youth work](#), and are developing the [youth work Census](#) to understand the amount and type of provision that is available for young people.

Topics for discussion

9. DCMS will outline the latest decisions regarding the Youth Investment Fund, statutory guidance and hear from members regarding the role of local authorities with youth services.
10. The NYA will outline some of their key work; the [youth work curriculum](#), the youth sector census and workforce development.
11. The youth work curriculum provides an educational framework and act as a reference tool to be used by decision makers, policy makers, commissioners, youth workers and young people. It is based on four cornerstones - education, empowerment, equality and participation - and shares a series of values and principles for youth workers.
12. The census intends to bring together a national picture of the services, charities, community groups and others that are providing support for children. An [interim report](#) has shown that there is a disparity in the amount and type of provision available to young people dependent on where they live with twice as much provision in the most affluent areas as opposed to the most deprived. There is more work to do to increase the response rate to the census and to increase the understanding of local authority services.

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Implications for Wales

13. None – Wales has its own guidance regarding youth work.

Financial Implications

14. None

Next steps

15. Officers will use the discussion to inform future work in this area and ongoing engagement with the NYA and DCMS.