



Youth Facilities Work Group



Councillor Rajbir Singh (Chair)



Councillor Jenny Chidley



Councillor Richard McVittie



Councillor Liam Preece

Review of Youth Facilities in Sandwell

Content	Page
1. Introduction from the Chair	3
2. Executive Summary	4
3. Background	5
4. Local Context	9
5. Youth Facilities Review	15
6. Findings	20
7. Conclusions	24
8. Recommendations	27
9. Working Group Comments	28
 Appendices	
1. Staffing Structure	32
2. Feedback table	33
3. Six town profiles	42
4. Voluntary Sector Funding	43
5. Sandwell Vision Ambitions	46

1.0 Introduction from Chair

The 'best start for all our children' is vital for a healthy and thriving future community in Sandwell. I hope everyone will agree with this statement and take action to turn this aspiration into a reality in Sandwell.

From the outset, the overriding purpose of reviewing our youth facilities was to ensure that young people received the best possible support and services that the council and its partners can provide within a limited cash envelope.

I am very grateful to Sandwell Council officers and councillors, who engaged our fantastic young people, because they are best placed to know what our communities need and take decisions about how best to organise vital services for young people.

The Scrutiny Review Group has acted as an advocate for young people living in Sandwell and provided honest and constructive challenge during this review. Without urgent action to examine our existing youth services, we are at danger of providing services that are not relevant to young people for the longer term and risk a lost generation with nowhere to turn.

Youth Work is more than simply being in spaces where young people are, or may be, and providing something for them to do. It is an important distinction to make and to recognise this when making decisions about the purpose and functions of Sandwell's Youth Service.

We carried out the review of Youth Facilities across Sandwell to ensure that young people's perspective led our future planning.

The impact of ten years of budget cuts is a reduction in youth facilities, universal youth services and capacity to provide sufficient youth provision. The review has highlighted the need to consider how much provision is required, the way youth work is provided and the impact of youth work on crime, confidence and the best start in life.

Our play and youth services benefit the wellbeing of children and young people, they are a vital component of successful lives and contribute to social value within Sandwell's communities. The best start in life for children and young people is one of the six outcomes in the 2020 corporate plan "Big Plans for a Great Place for the People of Sandwell". We want to work with residents, partners and businesses to create a healthier, more successful future for the young people of Sandwell.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has wide ranging implications for young people and it is even more important for Sandwell to focus on the needs and wants of our youth service offer now and in the future.

This report sets out the process, findings and recommendations of the work group which will be considered by the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board and subsequently by Cabinet to respond to the findings and recommendations.

2.0 Executive Summary

In April 2019 the All Party Parliamentary Group published its [report - youth affairs](#) from the inquiry into 'The Role and Sufficiency of Youth Work', and in July 2019, the government launched a review into how the statutory guidance for Local Authorities on providing youth services can be more useful for local youth service provision and young people themselves.

The rationale for establishing a Youth Facilities Working Group was the need to consider current local youth provision and the role and sufficiency of youth work in line with the statutory guidance for Local Authorities.

Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board [27 January 2020](#) agreed the scope and project plan to carry out the review from January to March 2020. More about the review process can be seen in paragraph 5 of the report.

The focus of the review was to understand the current levels of youth provision and if it was sufficient.

As a result of austerity and budget reductions Sandwell's youth service and the facilities that it offered to young people has reduced over a decade. The impact of this change has not been assessed.

Facilities for young people are not only provided by the local authority – there are many activities provided by Sandwell's community and voluntary sector and companies such as Sandwell Leisure Trust, but there is no information available to assess whether the provision meets need.

The Working Group wanted to find out Sandwell Young People's view about local provision.

During the course of the review Members visited youth facilities, met with parents, providers and young people to find out their opinions and information about our youth facilities and to hear about the facilities young people have, need and want. Young people from the SHAPE youth forum have participated in the local decision-making process, gathered evidence, participated in forums and held a 'Question Time' session with members.

This report captures current provision, where there are gaps, what young people think about the provision and what more they need and want.

The Working Group has gathered evidence, considered all findings and drawn conclusions to inform recommendations to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board. The report provides a summary of findings and a temperature gauge of what young people need and want more of for the future youth provision in Sandwell.

Sandwell's Vision

High quality play and youth services improve the life chances of children and young people and acknowledge that children and young people have a right to enjoy their childhood as well as enabling them to develop the confidence and aspirations for a successful adulthood. Youth and play services benefit whole communities, local neighbourhoods, families and individual children and young people.

3.0 Background

3.1 National Policy Context

National Youth Agency definition of Youth Work - 'Youth work is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum built from their lived experience, and their personal beliefs and aspirations. This process extends and deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live and supports them to proactively bring about positive changes. The youth worker builds positive relationships with young people based on mutual respect.' (*Vision for Youth Work in England to 2020*).

The YMCA recent report '[Out of Service](#)' highlights that youth services exist to provide a sense of belonging, a safe space, and the opportunity for young people to enjoy being young. However, for almost a decade, local authorities have struggled under the weight of funding pressures, meaning youth services are being forced to endure continued and damaging cuts.

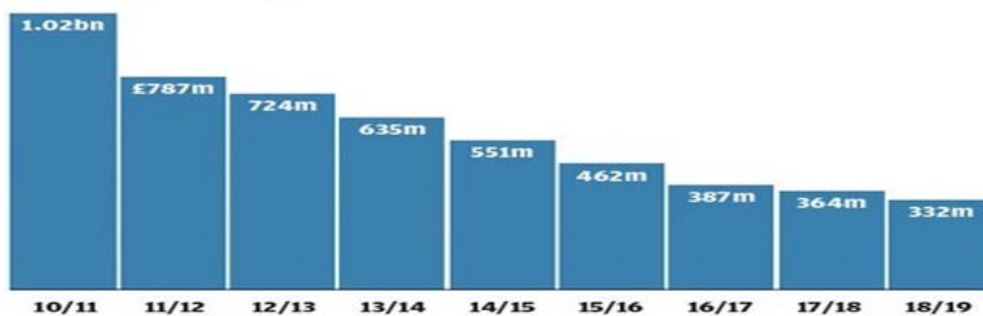
'The last decade was not good for youth work. The statistics are well known: since 2010, hundreds of youth clubs have been closed; thousands of youth work jobs lost; and more than 100,000 places for young people scrapped – the result of a 75 per cent reduction in council youth work budgets.'

Derren Hayes, Children & Young People Now Magazine, 28 January 2020

Analysis by the Commons Home Affairs Committee found that councils spent nearly £1bn less in real terms on youth services in 2018/19 than they did in 2010. Operating on dramatically reduced resources has not only seen councils slim down their youth work provision, but increasingly focus what little they have on interventions targeted at young people most in need of support.

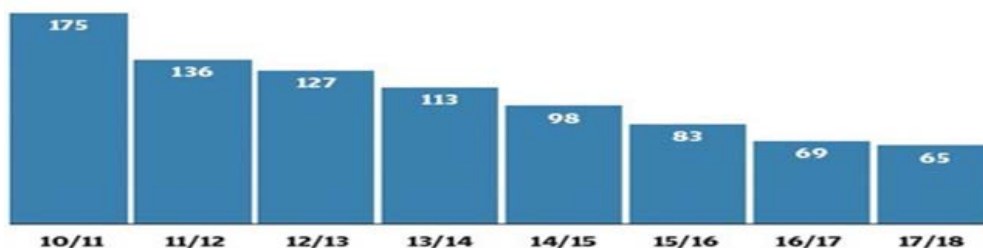
TRENDS IN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES SINCE 2010

Spending on young people's services



Source: Section 251 returns by local authorities, DJE

Changes in spending per young person



Source: Youth work review, APPG for Youth Affairs, April 2019

Every region of England has each seen funding for youth services cut by more than 60% since 2010. Some of the most severely affected experienced average cuts of as much as 74% in the North West, 76% in the North East, and 80% in the West Midlands.

3.2 The Cost of Austerity

The funding reductions have resulted in the amount spent on universal services, provision that is open to all young people, fall and spending on targeted provision rise. The shift has raised concerns among some youth work experts that targeted provision is seen as a short-term fix for a range of social problems rather than investing in long-term relationships with young people through informal education.

The House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee Serious Youth Violence report (July 2019) highlighted the need for partners to work together in a multi-agency approach. Serious violence has got worse after youth service cuts, police cuts, more children being excluded from school and a failure of statutory agencies to keep them safe.

The Government recognised that more needed to be done to intervene early in young people's lives, making sure they have safe places to go to and trusted adults to help them and protect them from harm. So much of this support has been stripped away, leaving children vulnerable to exploitation by criminal groups.

'Youth services are in tatters after almost a decade of austerity. Our research has shown that since 2010 government cuts have forced 940 youth centres to close with the loss of 4,500 youth workers.

Head of local government at Unison, Jon Richards.

3.3 The Value of Youth Work

The YMCA 'Out of Service' report also highlights that youth services have a vital role to play in **tackling crime, gang culture and loneliness**.

The report found that a quarter of young people do not spend time with their friends outside of school due to a **fear of gangs**. A third also stopped seeing friends away from school as they **did not feel safe on the streets**.

Only half of young people could identify any **youth services near them**, despite 55% believing they help keep young people off the streets, the report found.

In addition to reducing crime, more than half of those surveyed also said youth services gave them the opportunity to develop **new skills and improve their confidence and self-esteem**.

These findings show that what they are crying out for are the very things youth services are specifically designed to provide. Every young person deserves a **safe space, a trusted adult and the opportunity to enjoy being young**. Young people are telling us what they need – in their own words – and in order to support them now and in the future, they must be listened to and acted upon.

3.4 The Wider Benefits of Youth Work

It has long been recognised that youth work has wider benefits for youth and for the community.

'The positive impacts of youth work make it cost effective in the medium to long term and include; improved engagement with school and education; a positive impact on the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour amongst

young people; improvement in the wider learning and social skills of young people and helps to keep young people safe'. (Unite 2005)

Youth workers in communities and in specialist projects have regularly been shown to play important roles in supporting young people to make informed choices and deal with the range of challenges they encounter – from drugs and knife crime to mental ill-health and loneliness. In many cases, young people and the community themselves want more youth work above other services to help tackle these issues. (The role of Youth Services to reduce youth crime (NYA 2019)

In September 2019 it was reported that as youth budgets have shrunk over recent years, violent crime had spiked. Police chiefs and campaigners said it was no coincidence.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Mr Jamieson said:

“The Government had slashed council budgets. After years of austerity, youth services have been cut back to the bone. Young people used to be offered help, support and activities which enabled them to lead happy and successful lives”.

“Now, many of the services have been axed and it has left young people with limited life chances and no place to turn. I am deeply concerned that these cuts, combined with rising levels of school exclusions, are fuelling violent crime”.

In January 2020 the Government announced additional budget for Police services. Mr Jamieson said that ‘whilst good quality policing is crucial to reducing crime, other services have a big role to play too. We need to see an increase in youth services if the government are serious about tackling the root causes of crime too.’

In March 2020, the All-Parliamentary Group (APPG) report on knife crime and

Nationally, youth violence has become a hugely contentious public and political issue and the debate about the causes, extent and solutions seems to constantly occupy the media.

Neighbouring Authority **City of Wolverhampton Council** carried out a review of Youth Violent Crime in January 2020 and highlighted the need to support existing good work and to ensure that those with the knowledge, expertise and resources; who are best placed to make such judgements are supported and encouraged to do so.

One of the reviews ten recommendations was to continue to support young people in the City through **the provision of sustained and co-ordinated youth provision**, strategically informed by the Youth Engagement Strategy.

violence reduction - [Securing a Brighter Future](#) made some strong links between youth service closures and the rise in knife crime, as well as making recommendations for a national audit of current youth services, funding for Local Authorities (LA) to sustain youth work, statutory requirement for a minimum level of professional youth service provision in each LA area and investment in professional youth workforce.

The Local Government [Bright Futures Report 2017](#) (Updated in 2019) highlighted that there was increasing evidence about where early help can add real value, such as through preventing children and young people from experiencing adverse childhood experiences, to the value of supporting families to improve their lives.

The need for young people's voices to be central to the provision offered to them, for them to be able to participate and feel included in their communities, and able to access information, support and services they need to develop skills and knowledge and to be safe and well.

Developing services they need and want is a focus for this working group review of Youth Facilities.

5.0 Local Context

Sandwell town profiles and infographic summaries are available through following the link to [Sandwell Trends](#).

In 2017, a research project - Aspire Sandwell was conducted to evaluate the levels of aspirations amongst Key Stage 3 pupils across Sandwell. Young people were consulted and focus groups highlighted that students had high aspirations but did not know how to achieve them – often students would state option choices that did not link their future careers and that they did not know whom to talk to about their careers. Local stakeholders have been consulted during this review relating to local youth facilities.

4.1 Sandwell Council Resources

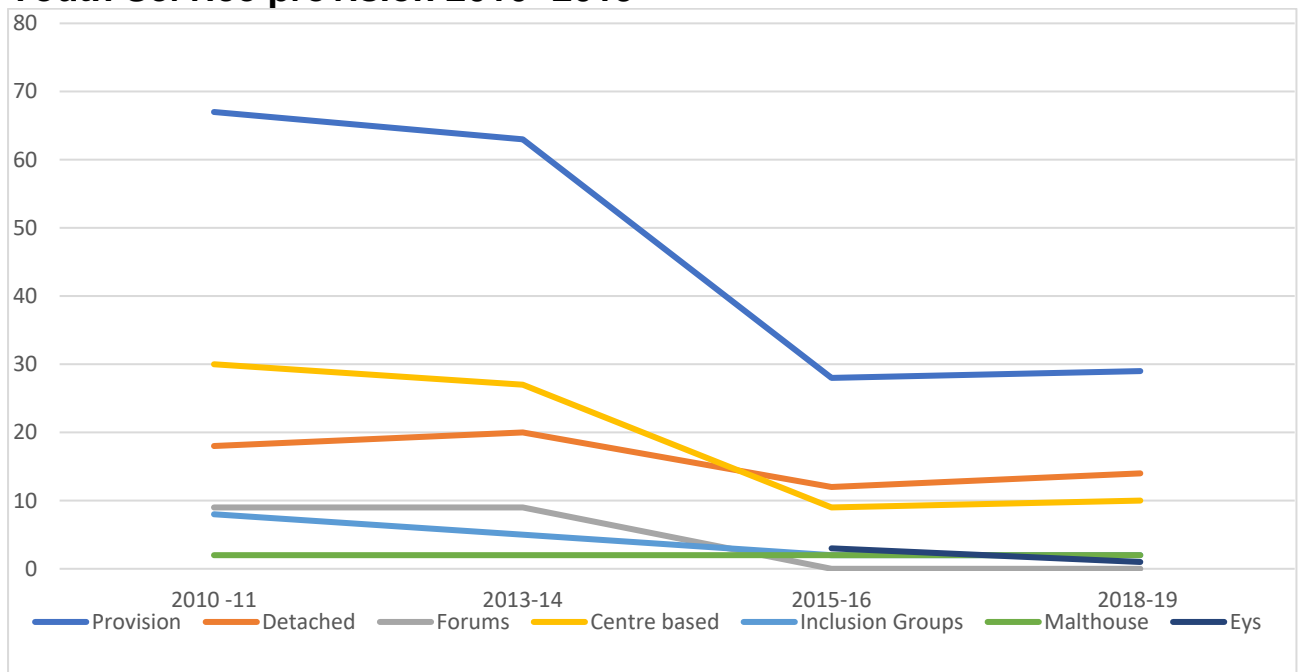
Despite recent years of austerity and the impact on local government budgets, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has maintained a budget for some important services for children and young people that many other local authorities have not managed to protect.

The figures in the table below demonstrate the reduction between 2010-2019 and how Sandwell has continued to invest in youth services.

Financial Year	Staffing Budget	Non Staffing Budget	Total Expenditure Budget	Total Income Generation	Target Funding
2010-11	2,261,000	1,357,800	3,618,800	-1,143,200	2,475,600
2013-14	1,562,600	1,036,700	2,599,300	-281,000	2,318,300
2017-18	790,600	269,600	1,060,200	-144,900	915,300
2018-19	828,100	279,200	1,107,300	-141,900	965,400
2019-20	858,700	279,200	1,137,900	-141,900	996,000

The budget reduction resulted in a marked reduction in youth provision between 2010-2019 and the way in which youth services were provided.

Youth Service provision 2010- 2019



- April 2010 - 11 – 67 provisions (18 detached teams, 9 forums, 30 centre based, 8 inclusion groups, 2 Malthouse)
- April 2013 - 14 – 63 provisions (20 detached teams, 9 forums, 27 centre based, 5 inclusion groups, 2 Malthouse)
- April 2015 - 16 – 28 provisions (12 detached teams, 0 forums, 9 centre based, 2 inclusion groups, 3 EYS Groups, 2 Malthouse) – Youth Service total loss 54%
- April 2018 - 19 – 29 provisions (14 detached teams, 0 forums, 10 centre based, 2 inclusion groups, 1 EYS Group, 2 Malthouse) Lost 1 Girls Group and 1 Boys Group
- April 2019 -20 – 28 provisions (14 detached teams, 0 forums, 9 centre based, 3 inclusion groups, 1 EYS Group, 1 Malthouse) Lost Hill Top YC and BLAST, Gained Wednesbury YC and Multi-Activity SEND Group
- Current Facilities: 8 youth clubs, Detached team, EYS (Enhanced Youth Service), Malthouse Outdoor Education Centre, Coneygre Arts Centre, Youth Buses, Teamworx, SHAPE programme.

4.2 Funding

Sandwell Council current youth provision costs in the region of £1 million. The Council continues to apply for funding for youth provision from a variety of funding pots. In 2018-19 Sandwell Council accessed external funding of £5,000 via Emerge (funded by Spirit of 2012) and Youth Services accessed £12,949 of funding for projects from Sandwell MBC Youth Offer budget.

The purpose of the Youth Offer Budget

The budget was split equally across the 6 towns and wards, was to support and empower Sandwell's young people and the provision of local services, activities and facilities that were of great value to local young people and communities.

Therefore, the budget was used to support internal and external projects that demonstrated they would support young people to be engaged in activities, feel safe and empowered to make positive lifestyle choices.

Since Town Grants funding, which included the Youth Offer Budget, were transferred to Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisation (SCVO) in January 2020 any groups internal or external who require funding would have to apply to SCVO.

Breakdown of Youth Offer Awarded 2018/2019 and 2019/20:

2018/19 Town	Total Spend
Smethwick	£ 6,667.88
Oldbury	£ 2,372.40
Rowley Regis	£ 6,259.29
Tipton	£ 4,648.40
Wednesbury	£ 6,776.05
West Bromwich	£10,726.16
Totals	£37,450.18

2019/20 Town	Total Spend
Smethwick	£ 1,800.00
Oldbury	£ 3,832.37
Rowley Regis	£ 3,432.11
Tipton	£ 4,195.00
Wednesbury	£ 10,696.11
West Bromwich	£ 6,447.05
Totals	£ 30,402.64

Further to total spend a breakdown of the Youth Funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20 for both internal and external funding awards can be seen at appendix X.

The appendix identifies the Group name, amount of funding, town and project for each award.

Future Funding

The Government has recognised the need to invest in young people's futures and announced in October 2019, a £12 million boost in youth projects across the Country, as part of the Government's commitment to help young people thrive and level up opportunities. This funding has supported Scouts and Guides groups, NHS volunteering by young people and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

In December 2019, The Queens speech highlighted that a £3.6 billion Towns Fund for towns across England has been brought into level up our regions. In September, 100 places were selected to develop proposals for a Town Deal of up to £25 million, 3 Towns in Sandwell were included in the invitation to develop proposals.

In February 2020 Sandwell Council approved grant fund of £311,000 for Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) to lead on awarding small grants and run the Vision 2030 Community Grants Programme. The funding is not specifically for youth facilities, however voluntary and community groups will be able to apply for small grants of up to £5,000 to support projects, activities and events that support Sandwell's Vision 2030 and are linked to the following:

- Building social connections
- Youth activities
- Healthy lifestyles

In March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic changed the landscape for services, for young people and youth work. The lock-down and social distancing requirements changed the focus of what we do to keep young people safe. Detached youth work has continued on a daily basis across the Borough with a focus on making sure young people understand the Government guidelines about social isolation/ social distancing and keeping themselves, friends and families safe. Messaging has also taken place through the [Facebook page](#) and virtual activities have been offered online.

It is almost certain that funding, in the wider emergency context, will be reviewed and that the funding assumptions highlighted in the review may be revised and public bodies be asked to divert to urgency measures.

4.3 The Current Youth Offer

There are 8 youth clubs altogether with at least one per town in Sandwell offering personal and professional development workshops for accreditation opportunities around First Aid, Food Hygiene, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) providing skills for life and Arts Award.

Workshops are also offered on drugs & alcohol, sexual health, smoking awareness, teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation, bullying, self-image, confidence and more. Clubs provide social and recreational activities too. Youth clubs develop an action plan with young people that drive activities based on young people's needs.

The Youth Service works closely with a range of partners, particularly the police and schools, and it works well alongside the play service, but these are not currently linked together organisationally, nor strategically or operationally. Sustainability of services is reliant on the continued provision of funding for services, some of which are directly funded through government grants or traded income.

Sandwell also runs its youth participation work through the SHAPE Programme and focuses on 5 key areas; Staying Safe, Being Healthy, Enjoying & Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Economic Wellbeing. The Youth Service has been integral to the development of the programme over the past 5 years and Sandwell's Youth Service staff enable the SHAPE programme to be delivered. Youth Service staff provide both strategic and practical support to the programme and have helped develop much of the activity on the ground including SHAPE Your Talent, Youth Conferences, surveys, youth takeovers, anti-bullying roadshows and the annual Youth Festival's.

There continues to be increasing demands on the youth and play services to support community and borough wide events. In particular, the Youth Service is called upon to provide support to local activities by providing the Climbing wall, youth buses and provision of live music from Coneygre Arts Centre. In addition, there is pressure to deliver the Youth Offer in some towns where there is a shortfall in voluntary sector provision.

Enhanced Youth Support has proven to be an integral part of the Youth Service offer. This service provides support to both individuals and groups through targeted interventions and referrals are received through a number of partners including schools, Community Operating Groups (COG's), Police and Children's Centres. The success has been such that demand is beginning to exceed capacity.

The current staffing structure can be seen at appendix 1 to the report.

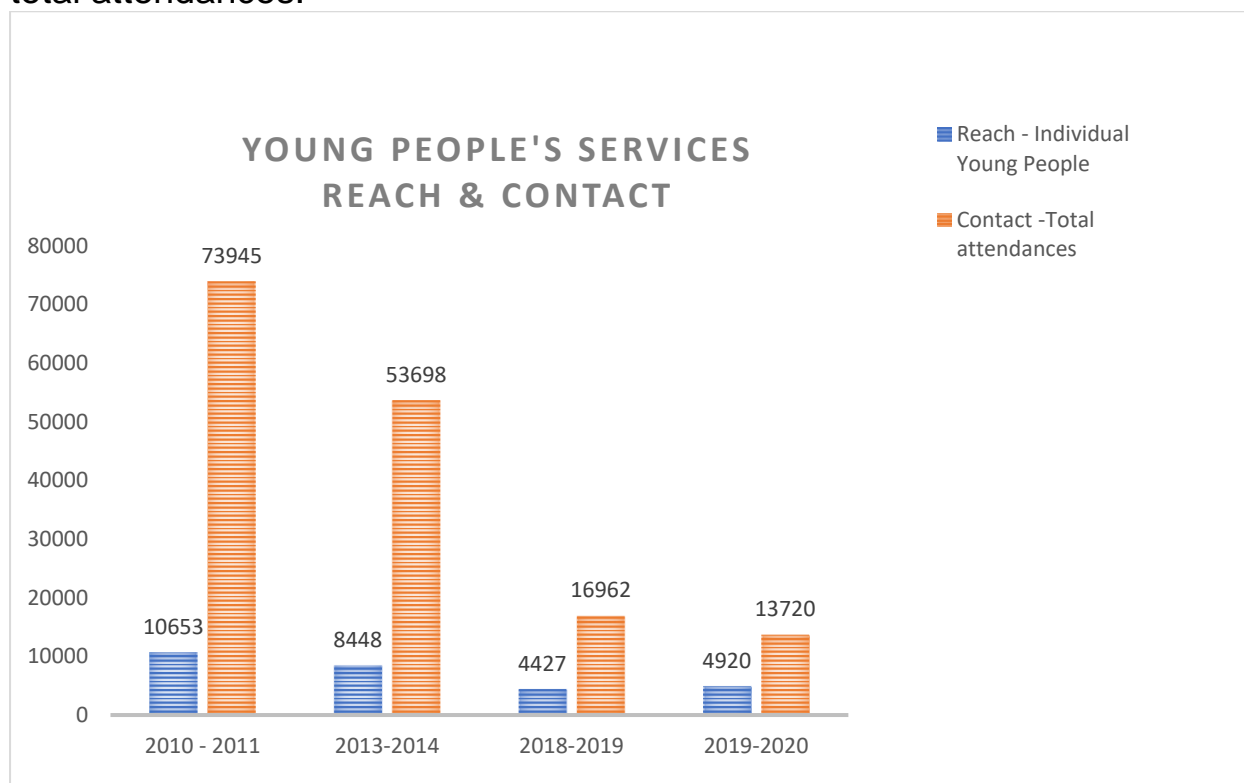
In addition to physical provision young people are encouraged to use social media, Just Youth is a [website](#) designed by young people for young people. The website is a free interactive online listings guide. Young people can register to be kept up to date of events and activities in Sandwell.

Justyouth.org.uk lets you know what's on in Sandwell, wherever you are, any time you like. The website has been stagnant for a while due to capacity to maintain and develop content but is currently being reviewed with young people to improve and maintain it going forward.

In addition to the website young people use [Facebook](#) and Instagram to participate in youth provision.

4.4 How many young people do we reach?

Physical interaction is measured in reaching individual young people and in total attendances.



With more funding youth services could reach more young people.

Youth work is an educational process that engages with young people in a curriculum that deepens a young person's understanding of themselves, their community and the world in which they live. It develops their confidence and enables them to believe in themselves and make positive choices and it is underpinned by a set of values, the first of which is that young people choose to take part.

Skilled youth workers build relationships that support young people to explore their personal, social and educational development. Youth work enables young people to develop their voice, influence and place within society.

5.0 Youth Facilities Review

5.1 **Why do a review?** The Children's Services & Education Scrutiny Board set up a working group consisting of four members of the Board to carry out a review Youth Facilities across Sandwell. Youth services was last reviewed by scrutiny in 2011. The working group agreed a focused approach to look at youth facilities from young people's perspective:

What youth facilities does Sandwell:

Have? Need? Want?

- What is the current provision?
- Does the current provision meet the needs of young people?
- What do young people want?

Scope of the review:

- to assess the impact of austerity and budget reductions on the youth service and the youth offer in Sandwell over a decade;
- to understand the needs and wants of Sandwell's youth population;
- to identify the current levels of activity and provision on offer to young people across Sandwell;
- to assess whether the level of provision, either directly provided or grant-aided/procured by Sandwell Council is sufficient to meet the needs and wants of young people across the Borough;
- to identify any gaps in current provision and how those gaps might be filled, or any over-sufficiency in provision;
- to explore best practice, technological changes and other ways of working.
- to involve young people in local decision-making.
- to use new approaches to scrutiny activity during evidence gathering.
- to produce a robust and coherent report, informed by young people, to inform a 'sufficiency strategy' for youth provision in Sandwell.

The review was member led with officers supporting, to focus on particular elements of the review, such as;

- Building the evidence base
- Capturing the local picture, through visits and meeting forums
- Considering external factors and examples of good practice

The officer steering group comprised of colleagues from Youth Service, Neighbourhoods, Democratic Services, young people from SHAPE and wider partner organisations including West Midlands Police and local support officers to ensure fit with wider policy, the Vision 2020 and the national & international context.

The review incorporated a range of methods to gather evidence, including engagement, fact-finding and research activities, over a three-month period.

Date	Activity
8 January	Scope and initial outline report
13 January	Online survey set up
20 January	Officer support meeting
21 January	Review Group - Scope meeting
27 January	Children's & Young People Scrutiny Board
3 February	Survey feedback
3 February	Invitations and planning for forums
5 February	Review Group Meeting
10 - 21 February	Members site visits to Youth facilities and Field Research
24 – 28 February	Forums: Coneygre Arts Centre Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children Police Representatives Youth Worker Staff Conference
2-4 March	Review feedback and findings
5 March	Members Question Time with SHAPE
10 March	Visit to the Factory Young People's Centre and meeting with NYA
12 March	Review Group meeting evaluation and recommendations
31 March	Draft report
April	Final Report and Recommendations
	Evaluation & Learning

The scrutiny process enabled young people to participate in democratic process and gave members and officers opportunity to trial different ways of working, as highlighted by the Review of Scrutiny Working Group in its recent [report and recommendations](#)

5.2 What did we do? - Evidence Gathering

A wide range of evidence was gathered in a short timeframe to provide a snapshot of the current 'Youth Offer' in Sandwell and the local and national context.

Method	How	Who
Desk top research	Internet research, comparator, CMIS recent reports	DfE, Specialists, other Local Authorities, SMBC
SHAPE survey	Survey feedback report	Young people
Survey #mychillzone	Social Media	Young people, Members, public and partners
Visits	<p>Virtual visits The Way, Wolverhampton, Youth Services, Stoke Reading Youth Offer, Reading.</p> <p>Members visits: Sandwell youth clubs & facilities The Factory, Birmingham</p>	Members Providers, voluntary organisations, youth workers, Members, parents, young people. Members, NYA, young people.
Forums	<p>Meetings on site Art and Drama Club, Coneygre Centre Sandwell Parents of Disabled Children, The Meadows School West Midlands Police, West Bromwich Police Station Youth Worker Staff Conference, Coneygre Centre</p>	Parents, youth workers, young people, volunteers, support workers and police officers.

Question Time Session in the Council Chamber	Working Group Members, Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life, Cabinet Member for Skills and Employment and the representative of the Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations were invited to form a panel. Facilitated by Democratic Services Officers.	Young people from the SHAPE programme and youth managers were invited to participate as the audience and to ask questions of the panel about the main themes arising from evidence gathering.
---	--	---

5.3 What other Local Authorities do

The Review Group identified four Local Authorities to consider youth provision elsewhere to consider the approach they took and the issues they encountered.

Stoke: Statistical neighbour, has six towns like Sandwell are about to review youth services.

Wolverhampton: Statistical neighbour and have one main youth provision established in 2016, following a review of youth services.

Birmingham: Statistical neighbour, manage 16 youth centres.

Reading: Carried out Youth review 2016, no Council universal provision, focus on targeted and intensive services.

Stoke City Council in 2019 considered plans for a £3.3m youth hub to be built in the town of Hanley. Stoke-on-Trent is made up of six towns, young people in [Stoke](#) felt it would alienate those who did not live in Hanley and could lead to more violence by bringing postcode rivalries together in one place. YMCA in Hanley, indicated it might help bring the different towns of Stoke together. Youth workers felt that the money would be better spent on youth clubs in the six towns of Stoke, rather than in the centre.

City of Wolverhampton Council – The Way, Youth Zone is in the Centre of Wolverhampton. It first opened its doors in early 2016, in a £5.5m project by Onside Youth Zones Organisation, which is a partnership of the private sector, local authority, young people and the community forms. The Way offers activities for young people every day of the week. It has been reported that the youth zone has had immeasurable impact on Wolverhampton youngsters which helps them keep active, keep off their computers, and stay off the streets. However, feedback from a survey of nearly 12,000 children and young people and their parents and carers in 2019 highlighted the need to support the youth of Wolverhampton to be healthier, be connected and be heard.

In January 2020 Wolverhampton Council launched the [youth engagement strategy #YES](#), £2m Investment over three years to create a youth engagement team to provide better information about and signposting to events and opportunities and set up a funding pot which young people, families, groups and organisations can use to develop new activities for young people. The multi-million pound strategy designed to help Wolverhampton's young people reach their full potential was officially launched at The Way Youth Zone.

Birmingham City Council – The Factory Young People’s Centre is a modern, state of the art youth provision, located in Longbridge, South Birmingham and is part of the Birmingham City Council Youth Service. The Centre provides a multitude of activities and opportunities for young people (aged 10-25), from weekly youth club programmes and events to a range of services and support that young people may require.

Reading Council - Following a review of Youth Services in 2016 Reading Council ceased all Universal Services and approved spending for targeted and Intensive Services. Reading Borough Council (RBC) works with Voluntary sector partners to provide a full range of universal activities. The targeted youth offer to young people in the town ensured that vulnerable young people key outcomes were met. [Reading Youth](#) provides information about youth services and activities available for young people in Reading.

5.4 Workshop to consider the findings

The Work Group reviewed all the evidence in a work shop to focus on the matters that had been clearly identified as priorities for young people, parents, providers and partners in relation to what youth facilities young people have, need and want.

There were strong and clear messages about what young people **want** from the range of evidence gathered. The core officer group provided evidence of what provision, resource and capacity the Council currently **have**, and parents, partners and police gave clarity to what more they **need**.

The Review Group focused on the main themes arising from evidence gathered, however Members identified several more gaps and matters for further investigation, which have been listed in the findings table.

The financial and external pressures on Youth Provision has been captured in the context of the report. The benefits of youth work to young people, families and the community have been referred to throughout this review and the Work Group has highlighted the need for youth service to work closer with partners and the voluntary sector.

6.0 Findings

Summary of findings from the evidence gathered.

The findings are not in priority order:

Age range	<p>Currently: 11-19 years</p> <p>There is a need to separate out the age groups: Play provision for a younger age group (8-11years). A range of age appropriate youth activities for middle (11-16) and older (16-19) groups.</p>
Arts and drama	<p>Coneygre Centre is in Tipton. Arts and drama activity is in high demand, parents and children travel from all around the area to use the facility. Young People want more provision like this and need more hours here.</p>
Austerity	<p>The reduction to youth provision has been too great, it has depleted the number of facilities, no investment in has been made for developing facilities or for new equipment (including the youth bus) for a decade.</p>
Communication	<p>External Communication is not reaching people: The mechanisms we use to communicate are not what most young people access. We need to update what we do to reach young people with information about what's on, what good practice is happening and what's on in other facilities across Sandwell.</p> <p>Internal: How the youth service communicates with staff and includes part-time workers. Email addresses for part-time youth workers and regular youth worker conferences would be beneficial.</p>
Crafts and skills	<p>Youth workers identified a gap in provision for young people to develop skills, make something and take it away, and develop interests in hobbies that grow skills and wellbeing in young people.</p>
Disabilities	<p>There are facilities for young people with additional needs, but transport is limited, facilities have reduced and are not easily accessible. Parents highlighted that it is not easy to find out what is happening and where.</p>
Multi agency approach	<p>There is some multiagency and collaborative working between agencies and this needs further consolidation to ensure all services relating to young people, take a holistic approach to ensure that they have the provision that best meets their needs.</p>
Partnership working	<p>Opportunities need to be created to further map the Youth Offer at a town level, including Council, voluntary sector and private provision, and to create forums for dialogue between agencies to identify further gaps and needs.</p> <p>There is a need to explore how local businesses can</p>

	<p>create opportunities and pathways for young people to thrive.</p> <p>It is important for young people to feel a valued part of a multicultural society, that recognises the contribution they have to make and supports them to achieve their aspirations and agencies should work together to facilitate this.</p>
Own space	<p>We need one building for all youth provision in every town, young people want one building in each town which they can take ownership of, for local youth to own and run as their space.</p> <p>Many youth clubs and activities use shared facilities – these spaces can be limited (storage space, use of facilities and access to the building). Problems were highlighted such as the time taken to take equipment out and put it away, not being able to leave work and projects out, access times to buildings etc.</p>
Refugees and asylum seekers	<p>We want to understand how we support young people new to UK. Sandwell Council collects data from young people on their immigration status, any young person can access our youth facilities and young people between the age of 11- 18 who want to access youth provision or may need additional support could be referred from STEPS to the Youth Service Enhanced Youth Support team. EYS could then meet with the young person and provide appropriate support to enable them to have support to access universal youth provision with some 121 support if required.</p>
Residential facilities for youth service	<p>Sandwell Council has residential facilities that the Youth Service struggles to afford to take young people to. We need to make Sandwell Council facilities affordable and available when it comes to residential.</p> <p>A suggestion made was that when Council owned facilities meet their income target, the facilities could be opened up to be used by Sandwell Youth Services for the young people of Sandwell.</p> <p>The Youth Service has operational management responsibility of Coneygre Arts Centre and Malthouse Stables Outdoor Education Centre. These centres both have income targets which contribute to the core budget of the Service.</p>
Resources and Equipment	<p>Some of the equipment being used is old, much needs to be replaced, and each provision needs a resources budget for activities and to replenish equipment. Is a pool</p>

	table what they want or need? Young people want Wi-Fi and technology including games.
Sports and activity	Sandwell has a variety of teams and clubs which provide access for young people to sports and activity such as football, boxing and other team sports. Many are provided by voluntary organisations, we need to find out what is available and develop the team building and pride in their achievements.
Transport	Parents say that they want safer transport for young people to youth facilities. Transport can be an issue, it is difficult for young people to get to a facility on their own. Catching buses costs money and waiting around bus stop is a concern for parents of some vulnerable young people. Generally young people are reliant on parents taking and picking them up.
Use of public buildings	We want to find out why libraries and schools are not used in the evening. Several facilities are considered to be underused as per their potential, these spaces should be reflected in the youth offer. There is a need to do more research about how our facilities are being used and what is the path to maximise utilisation. Use of public space and how the Council uses public buildings should be a topic for future discussion.
Use of technology and Wi-Fi	Young people want access to Wi-Fi, they need it to find information and to have fun. Further investigate the suggestion of an APP for young services which could improve access to information for young people partners and parents and modernise how staff share information.
Voluntary Sector	The evidence gathered does not adequately reflect the wider voluntary sector youth facilities and how young people across the Borough are able to access services regardless of who the provider is. There is more work needed to map out voluntary sector provision and consider funding opportunities.
Youth buses	Youth workers and the older group of young people want to get the Youth Bus back on the road. The double decker youth bus has been off the road for four months for repairs, because of its age spare parts have to be made for it. The youth bus has been used as a chill out space and used primarily by older young people and detached workers. It is a safe, warm and dry space. There is a smaller bus available, but the double decker is special with activities and an upper floor of gaming, dancing and disco! There may be a need to replace the bus due to the high demands on the youth bus and the fact it is 20 years

	old and is prone to breakdown during the winter months. To replace the bus and fully kit it out would require an investment of up to £200,000.
Youth Symposium	We want to bring together partners and organisations to discuss Youth Facilities.

5.6 What did we find out?

Headlines - What young people want and need:



Dry – A place of our own, safe, flexible and dry.



Wi-Fi – connection to Wi-Fi to communicate with friends and play games.

Main messages from providers and partners:



Facilities – shared facilities, smaller space, storage and reduced capacity over last decade. Cost of space hire and residential facilities.



Upgrade – facilities and equipment not replaced, also need to modernise spaces and add Wi-Fi.



Capacity – need more youth workers to open more evenings.



Age range and access – Need to engage young people earlier and enable access for all.

Main messages from parents



Communication and information - Parents and Young people want to know what is available,



Happy and confident - Parents recognise that young people grow in confidence and meet new friends.

7.0 Conclusions

Evaluation of the findings

The key themes highlighted in our findings were raised across all forums and in the feedback from surveys. The common themes reflect matters raised about Council facilities and some voluntary provision and partnership working. We found that there was more work to do to map out voluntary sector and wider provision.

A wide range of evidence was considered, and there will be more work to look at provision, but based on evidence gathered in this review, the Work Group were minded to say that the **current provision is not sufficient to meet the needs of young people.**

There was consensus from those consulted that **local youth facilities should be retained in each Town**, and that each facility needed to be upgraded and modernised, also that **current provision should be extended** to more evenings and holiday periods.

The Work Group found that there were good facilities in some towns and good practice, but that the **lack of youth worker capacity** meant that some facilities could not meet demand, specifically the Coneygre and Malthouse youth facilities. It was also found that there were **untapped funding resources** and that more could be done to focus on funding opportunities.

In other youth clubs based in shared facilities, there were **issues about access**, having sports facilities hired out during youth club times and the storage of equipment issues all of which had a detrimental effect on the youth work and impacted on the attendance.

Another factor raised in all forums was the need to **reach young people earlier** and the need to separate out the age groups, to **allow each age group to operate an age appropriate activity.**

The lack of consistency across the youth facilities in each of the Towns was an underlying issue, but the main theme from youth was that there was not enough **local youth provision**. Many travelled to Art and Sport provision but did not know about other provision close to where they live. More work may be needed to **map out youth facilities** and if they meet the needs of the local community.

Another key theme arising was the lack of **communication and promotion** of what was available and where, and also the need to review mechanisms used to communicate information.

The Work Group looked at other Local Authority provision and considered a wide range of advice and information relating to **good youth provision** and the **impact of youth work** on young people's futures, Health and Wellbeing and the impact of youth work on violent crime and communities. All of these factors relate directly to the Sandwell Vision and to the Sandwell Plan: Big Plans for a Great Place.

OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



THE SIX OUTCOMES:

- The best start in life for children and young people
- People live well and age well
- Strong, resilient communities
- Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
- A strong and Inclusive Economy
- A connected and accessible Sandwell

Realising our vision in Big Plans for a Great Place is a huge undertaking and will mean breaking the cycle of poverty, improving support and outcomes in a child's early years, increasing skills and education attainment, reducing health inequalities, creating an environment for more inclusive economic growth and ensuring all residents are able of benefiting from new opportunities.

Being a young person in Sandwell

When young people were asked if there is anything else they would like to say about being a young person in Sandwell, the most popular response was that it was challenging and difficult for a number of reasons such as school and not being listened to, lots of homework and exams, bullying and lack of support for young people particularly around mental health.

Comments were made that Sandwell is boring and there were no opportunities or nothing to do for young people and would be good to offer 'cheaper or free facilities' and ensure young people's voices are heard. Statements were made by young people saying, 'they felt scared due to mean people' and references

were also made to knife crime. Although most of comments made were negative, a few respondents did make positive statements saying they were 'happy', 'it's good'.

Taking all the evidence gathered into consideration and listening to the feedback from young people the Work Group concluded that the following priorities need to be addressed first to inform 7 recommendations:

What	How	Why
Communication Plan	R1	Young people, parents and youth workers told us that they did not know what was available and where. The way we communicate was not how young people want information to be shared.
Wi-Fi and Dry	R2	Dry – A place of our own, safe and dry. Wi-Fi – connection to communicate with friends and play games. Facilities and better use of what we have. Upgrade Equipment.
Transport	R3	Safe travel to facilities was raised by young people and parents, especially for vulnerable young people.
Funding	R4	Access to funding pots and future funding was raised to expand current provision. There is also a need to strengthen the current Youth Service offer with revenue investment.
Sufficiency of Youth Offer	R5	The demand for youth facilities was unmet, the need to work in a multi-agency approach was Identified.
Capacity	R6	If we want to do more youth work, more work with partners we will need more youth workers. If we want to extend the age range to accommodate young people earlier, we will need additional capacity.
Democratic	R7	SHAPE participation in the review and specifically in the Question Time evidence gathering session was innovative and successful and should be embedded in the democratic processes for future scrutiny work.

8.0 Recommendations

The panel recommends that;

1. **A Partnership Framework (to include a Communications Plan and Multi-agency approach)** is developed with young people, for young people and is specifically targeted to promote current activities and future opportunities using the experts within the council to provide a joined-up plan that compliments services across the local authority.

This should consider how we currently communicate, what we currently communicate and the most effective platforms to use across a range of media.

A **Youth Symposium** should be held in early 2021 for all partners in the borough to help build a clear picture of what is available, build upon key themes arising from the Scrutiny Review, the multi-agency approach and develop closer partnership working for a joined-up offer for Sandwell. The youth symposium should draw together a joined-up approval to youth work and young people in Sandwell.

2. Young people should be afforded **safe, flexible, space of their own, with 'Wi-fi & Dry' as the basic offer in Sandwell**. The council should take a strategic approach and consider modelling 'space options' across the Borough's 6 towns, these could test:
 - a) Use of libraries within extended opening times – rethinking their use in the community
 - b) Mobile provision (through a bus or support vehicle).
 - c) Pop up shops and underused town centre units.
 - d) Leisure & Activity Centres.
 - e) Other council properties and schools.
 - f) New build, where no existing options are deemed suitable.
3. The council explores the option of providing **free or concessionary public transport for young people to enable better access to local youth activities, opening up Sandwell and all it offers**. Targeted provision should be considered in relation to vulnerable young people and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).
4. The council should **take a more strategic approach to funding** and explore existing funding pots through a better use of regional partnerships and directories. Better alignment could be made to **complimentary activity within the voluntary sector** (such as SVCO's

community grants) and **to the corporate social responsibility objectives** of local businesses.

5. The Council should **develop a renewed 'Youth Offer'** which clearly identifies the very positive activities that are currently on offer and addresses those gaps which would enable a more bespoke approach. The **National Youth Agency's Standard Quality Mark Framework** should be used to measure the capacity, quality and sufficiency of youth facilities in Sandwell.
6. A renewed youth offer would aim to close the gaps in provision and ensure sufficiency of youth facilities, but in order to do would require an increase in capacity and therefore the resources required to deliver the provision would need to be reviewed.
7. Following the success of the **Question Time session** held during the review, it is recommended that quarterly Question Time sessions be scheduled into the Scrutiny Work Programme, with Shape forum the Cabinet Member / Champion for Children and Young People.

9.0 Evaluation of the Scrutiny Process

An evaluation of this review will inform the development of the scrutiny function in Sandwell. The Working Group will refer any matters outside the review remit to other scrutiny work streams, which will help to shape the scrutiny work programme for 2020-21.

The review enabled members to:

- lead on the review and work closely with core officers;
- use technology and social media channels to gather evidence and inform the public;
- engage with service users and parents through a schedule of site visits and forums across the Borough and the needs of the service.
- be the public voice, question and challenge services;
- make recommendations for service improvement to the Cabinet Decision Makers.

10.0 Comments from the Working Group

The Work Group would like to thank all young people and members of the public and partners who participated and contributed to the consultation process and forums to gather evidence for the review.

The Work Group valued the contribution of members of the SHAPE youth forum, young people have participated at all stages of evidence gathering and held a question time session to challenge the work group as part of the democratic scrutiny process.

- The evidence gathered presents a snapshot of what young people ‘Have Need and Want’ in relation to youth facilities in Sandwell in Spring 2020.
- The review findings and recommendations are the catalyst to start a larger piece of work to develop a sustainability strategy and multiagency and collaborative approach to youth facilities in the future.
- The Work Group highlighted some quick wins that the Council has already addressed and it has made recommendations for change which focus on longer-term and transformational change that will be considered in a wider forum, which will need strategic planning and resource. Our review was supported by an officer group and the scrutiny team we agreed the focus of the review and agreed which methods to use to get underneath the issues and identify the gaps in provision. We used tools and techniques to reach out and engage with stakeholders, to enable us to listen to the what providers and service users had to say.

Youth facilities in Spring 2020 is a moving picture due to Covid-19 and the need for Youth Facilities to adapt and change is even more important now.

Chairs comments

“There have been numerous advantages of this Youth Facilities Review Group, I have received many complimentary comments and would like to sincerely thank officers for managing this process to meet best practise in local government. Three themes on which I would like to make observation are;

- **Quality:** The quality of research, engagement with stakeholders and documents was excellent. The involvement of officers, councillors, young people and partners was clear, with defined roles and responsibilities.
- **Relationships:** The positive tone of engagement with young people, parents and partners sets a framework for ongoing productive relationships between the council and community.
- **Young people focus:** Throughout the review process, best-practice was followed and due to the thoughtful involvement from councillors and officers, we have produced a set of serious recommendations about meeting the needs of young people and this will result in real enhanced services.”

Councillor Rajbir Singh
Chair Children's and Education Scrutiny Committee.
Councillor for Bristnall ward.

Contributors:

Working Group: Councillors Jenny Chidley, Rajbir Singh, Richard McVittie and Liam Preece.

Childrens Services & Education Scrutiny Board Members: Councillors Lorraine Ashman, Kerrie Carmichael, Elaine Costigan, Kay Millar, Sue Phillips, Ann Shackleton and Zahir Hussain,

Report author: Deb Breedon, Democratic Services SMBC
Review facilitators: James Sandy and Alexander Goddar, Democratic Services SMBC

Core Officer Group: Lesley Hagger, Executive Director Children's Services
Tariq Kari, Youth Service
Dawn Maleki, Youth Service
Neesha Patel,
Manny Sehmbi,

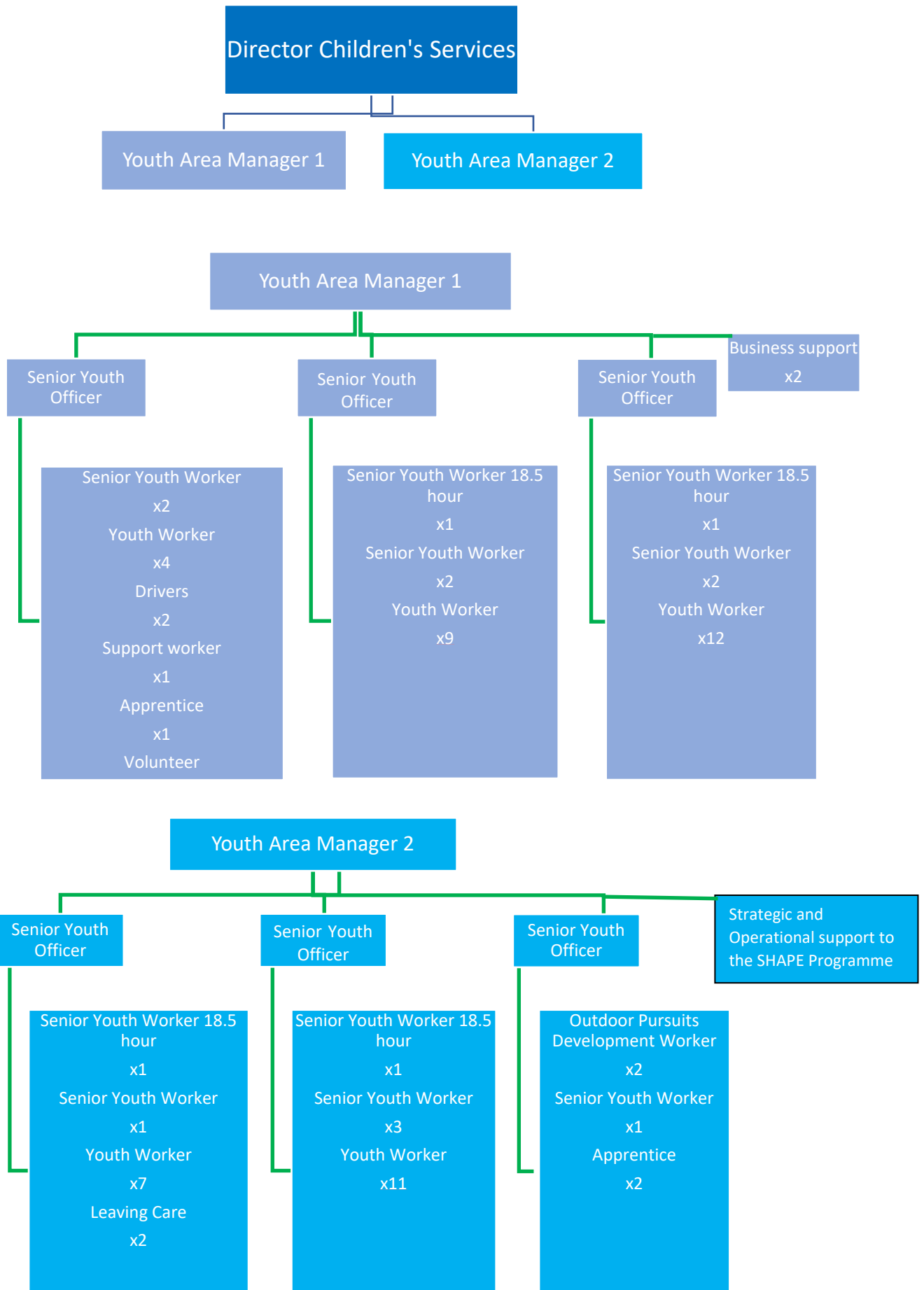
Youth Workers
Shape Youth Forum

All youth workers

Jessica Mansell
Daniel Mansell
Mahmoud Suraj
Mohammed All Hasan
Suhana Khanum
Jack Dunn
Jack Murphy
Josh Jordan
Rahaf Mansour
Noah Livingston
Trinity Livingston
Jessica Hawthorn
Faiza Ramzan
Adam Shaikh
Steve Nimo
Paris Gayle

Organisations

West Midlands Police
The Factory Birmingham
Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)



Feedback Table			Appendix 2
Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Oldbury			Oldbury
Have	Need	Want	
None	Somewhere for young people to go	Something for young people to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks referred to were Perrys Park, Warley Woods, Barnford Park and Hurst Green. However other parks in nearby towns such as Lightwoods Park, West Smethwick Park, Haden Hill, Britannia Park and Sandwell Valley. • Youth Clubs – Many young people had never been to a youth club, others went to Kings Community Church, brownies, girl guides, Christ Church youth club. • Leisure Centres – Langley Leisure Centre, Portway Leisure Centre. Other towns Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Thimblemill Leisure Centre, Harry Mitchell Centre, Hadley Stadium. Out of Sandwell - The Crystal Leisure Centre. • Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Subway, chip shops, Pizza Pan, Saphari, Delightful Desserts, Greggs. Others away from Oldbury include Nandos, Five Guys, Starbucks, Big Johns, Pizza Hut, Dominos
Not sure – Have facilities for younger children	More after school activities and activities during school holidays that are suitable for older children.	Something for older children during school holidays.	
Don't know	Youth club. Langley youth club in langley park was great. Now it is shut, and park gates are locked we chill on the high street which is not ideal. Would like to see partnership with local restaurants to do cooking classes and fund raising for Langley.	Cooking lessons, annual local sport events for residents to raise money for the town. More life skills workshops.	
No regular ones that I have seen advertised	West Bromwich Albion (WBA) kicks - (only mini kicks at the moment).	WBA Kicks Barnford Park sessions during the Summer holidays (like the ones run a couple of years ago)	

			<p>and Burger King. Out of Sandwell include Yo Sushi and Wagamamas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre – Oldbury High Street, Retail Park but more responses for West Bromwich Town Centre and Ikea at Wednesbury Retail Park. However, the majority claimed they visited Bullring and Merryhill shopping centres, a few said Harborne high street and Halesowen • Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative's homes • Out of Sandwell – Birmingham, Kings Norton, Bournville, Cotteridge, Redditch, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield, Halesowen, Dudley, West Bromwich Albion Stadium • Entertainment – Cinema, Starbucks, Star City, Odeon, Bowling, shops, swimming pool, restaurants, cricket club, concerts, arcades, flipout, dessert shops, ice skating, mini golf, shopping. One references was made that there needs to be more under 18s entertainment venues • Other – More under 18s, under 16s, more malls, rugby and cricket clubs
--	--	--	---

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Rowley Regis			Rowley Regis
Have	Need	Want	
Youth club at Brickhouse and the youth bus	A bigger youth centre with wi-fi and a tuck shop.	Somewhere to go that is safe and clean and I can play my music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks referred to were Haden Hill, Britannia Park. Other parks referred to were Netherbrook park and Baremore park. • Youth Clubs – Stanley’s youth club, Brickhouse youth club • Leisure Centres – Haden Hill Leisure Centre • Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Ginos, Dixys, Nandos, Eat Central • Town Centre – Blackheath, Merry Hill, Walsall, Birmingham City Centre • Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes • Out of Sandwell – Walsall, Langley, Dewsbury, London, Quinton • Entertainment – Under 18s club, parks, leisure centres, Cinema, Merryhill • Other – Pub, Merryhill
<p>Councillor comments – Activities for youth in Rowley Regis.</p> <p>At Youth Rowley, Go Play Rowley Regis, Beam Sandwell, JUST YOUTH - Detached Youth Work, Oakham – Tividale, Rowley Youth Club</p>			

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Smethwick			Smethwick
Have	Need	Want	
Lightwoods Park, Victoria Park and Warley Woods	More youth exercise machines to keep fit. More outdoor toys for the youth to enjoy and play with friends/family.	More youth exercise machines to keep fit. More outdoor toys for the youth to enjoy and play with friends/family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks referred to were Victoria Park and West Smethwick Park and others were other areas of Sandwell such as Lightwoods Park & Warley Woods • Youth Clubs – Admiral Club, Halesowen or Oldbury. A few responses said they don't go • Leisure Centres – For swimming they attend Langley Leisure Centre and Thimblemill Leisure Centre. A few mentioned Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge • Food Outlets – McDonalds, KFC, Starbucks, Nandos, Pizza Hut, Delightful desserts, Toby Carvery, Chip shop, Mr Singhs, Chicken.com • Town Centre – Smethwick Linden Road and the other comments were Birmingham city centre, Merry Hill, Bullring, Dudley, West Bromwich town centre • Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative's homes

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of Sandwell – Leicester for family, Merryhill, Quinton, Dudley, Stourbridge • Entertainment – Star City, cinemas, reel cinema, Starbucks, inflation, rockup, Broadway plaza, football clubs • Other – Gurdwara, Arkham Asylum, Merryhill
--	--	--	--

Councillor visit feedback

Several youth facilities listed were no longer available. We need to update information about what we have.

Visit to African French Speaking Community Support highlighted:

- The netball club is the only activity held since June 2019 for girls aged 12 to 24. The initiative is funded by Sports England for 2 years. They would like to do more but do not have the funding
- This is one of the only activities in the area that young girls can get involved in which does not impact on cultural sensitivities. Especially for girls from BAME communities where some parents are not allowing girls to participate in activities after school where boys are present.
- Not many opportunities for youth activities in the area. Relates to issues where young people are getting drawn into mischief and crime and there are gang related issues aligned to this.
- The type of activity that would attract youth include Music, Dance and Sports.
- There is a lack of opportunities for young people in the area to go on trips outside of school. Many children do not ever get to go away and some provision to take young people on trips is needed.
- Partnership working between organisations in the area is non-existent and information sharing on initiatives and activities isn't happening
- Accessibility - Referral not required; people can just turn up on the day. Although it's difficult to access the building during activities times as it's out of hours and reception staff are not on-site.
- Staff - Very welcoming and approachable. Working very well with participants.
- Space - The only space available for the session was a sports hall which was adequate for the netball session.

- Atmosphere - Very positive atmosphere and participants were getting on and having a lot of fun.
- Activities - The provision is only funded to hold one netball session a week.
- Online presence - Details are available on social media and are promoted on-line

Smethwick Windmill Youth Club - Tuesday & Thursday - 6.30pm - 8.30pm

During the visit the member spoke to 3 youth workers and 5 participants of the session. Feedback included:

- Accessibility issues – due to the restrictions in the building access was not easy. An intercom system was in place but was not user friendly. Both staff and participants recognised this is a major barrier. It was creating a closed environment
- The space was rented from the centre therefore there were issues around storage space and not been having whole control of what the areas could be used and for equipment storage.
- Participants recognised the club keeps them away from involvement in crime and trouble on the streets, including involvement in drugs and gangs. The participants praised the service and the youth workers.
- There was acknowledgment that more needed to be done to engage young people through arts, dance, music, sports, cricket, football and trips, more games, pool tables and swimming.
- Potential tournaments and working with other youth clubs
- The youth bus initiative was talked about, but young people felt this wasn't a solution to providing a safe and inclusive place for young people to engage in.
- Funding for trips and opportunities to do something different was suggested
- Accessibility – they identified issues with accessing the building and it not been user friendly. Referrals to the service are not needed.
- Staff - Very enthusiastic and engaged with participants very well.
- Space - Really good-sized room however there wasn't many activities/recourses visible for the participants. Also, there was the option of using a sports hall on site.
- Atmosphere - Very relaxed atmosphere and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves and getting on
- Activities - Mainly socialising with the options of games and sports activities.
- Online presence - All promotion is done online.

Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Tipton			Tipton
Have	Need	Want	
Youth club at Malthouse and youth bus on Tibby	A dedicated youth centre or youth cafe, where we can do what we want, have access to Wi-Fi and socialise with friends.	Youth Centre that is open 5 evenings a week and on Saturdays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks referred to were Victoria Park and Jubilee Park. Other Sandwell parks visited were Brunswick Park, Langley park and out of Sandwell include Cannon Hill park • Youth Clubs – No youth clubs were stated. • Leisure Centres – Tipton Sports Academy. Other centres include Haden Hill Leisure Centres and Wednesbury Leisure Centre • Food Outlets – McDonalds, Nandos, Bella Italia, KFRC, Night Garden, Jade, Star Pizza • Town Centre – those mentioned in Sandwell include Wednesbury Retail Park and West Bromwich. Out of Sandwell Birmingham was mentioned. • Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative's homes • Out of Sandwell – West Bromwich for shopping, Dudley Castlegate, Birmingham • Entertainment – Under 18s parties, cinema, dance, Castlegate Showcase
None	Clubs, sports, supervision and advice	I don't know	
Unsure	Happy Programme	Anything to help get kids off streets	
None	Clubs and access to school facilities	As above	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other – Merryhill
Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback from SHAPE survey relating to Youth Facilities
Wednesbury			Wednesbury
Have	Need	Want	
No comments received			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received
<p>Wednesbury North Blast youth club (building lives around sound truth) The young people need more equipment and need more social interaction. Getting them involved in joining teams etc football maybe taking them to a game.</p> <p>They feel let down sometimes and need more support and advise around knife crime meeting with the local police team why are they never coming to meet them at the youth club? They said they need inspiring.</p>			
Feedback from Youth Services Review Survey #mychillzone			Feedback SHAPE survey - Youth Facilities
West Bromwich			West Bromwich
Have	Need	Want	
Park Basketball Area	Youth Group for teenagers including mentors	Social Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks referred to were Hill top park, Dartmouth and Sandwell Valley Youth Clubs – 1 person stated they attend a youth club but didn't state which one • Leisure Centres – Meet friends in West Bromwich Leisure Centre • Food Outlets – McDonalds • Town Centre – New Square
Lyng Community Association clubs is	Places to go on a weekend, during the day and evening.	Drop in youth centres, places to play sports, music clubs	

nearest that I know about			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home environment – Own home, Family, friends, relative’s homes • Out of Sandwell – None mentioned • Entertainment – None specifically mentioned • Other – None mentioned
<p>There were no Youth Clubs in Hateley Heath Ward. SMBC GoPlay service currently contracted by Hateley Cross Big Local to provide research data with recommendations for a Young Voices legacy project in the Ward area. Was not able to visit the school workshops, gaining access to schools proved difficult.</p>			
<p>Tanhouse Youth Club, Great Barr (Tuesdays and Thursdays) has always been successful. Recent events highlighted at tasking in the area had an impact on numbers attending the Youth Club. Promotional work to engage new young people into the club was taking place, youth workers from Tanhouse were going out on outreach work in the area and encouraging young people to use the Tanhouse facility. At this stage I don’t feel we need additional youth work, we just need to promote what we have and encourage young people to use it.</p>			
<p>Additional Comments SEN provision across Sandwell</p>			
<p>Meadows School</p> <p>A visit to Meadows school resulted in a number of comments and suggestions made by parents who have children that attend the Meadows School. One parent was very proactive in involving their children in groups/clubs. These are current activities and ideas put forward by the parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Shephard Church has a community cinema and is well attended with 35 children. • Sneed Water Centre has paddle boarding, raft building, and canoeing. They supply wet suits and toilets are available. • Indoor skate park in Bentley, Wolverhampton. Cost £45 for family. Consider reducing cost. • Fennox BMX skate park in Perry Bar. • Swanpool in Dartmouth Park. The boating swans cost approx. £10 for 20 minutes, perhaps a more reasonable charge of £5 for 30 mins could be introduced. Also, is it possible to introduce paddle boarding/canoeing. 			

- Portway Lifestyle Centre offer a family pass. The children attend skating on a Friday night 6.00pm-7.30pm. perhaps more child friendly activities here? There is a small pool that perhaps could be used.
- The Fort in Dartmouth Park was not being used, so this would be perfect for Sandwell to utilise the building with a children's centre/youth zone.
- Dartmouth Park could offer the Tennis Courts for free?
- Link with the Bicycle shop at Dartmouth Park, potential for a Bikeability course/Sandwell 'Doctor Bike'.
- Dartmouth Park climbing rope facility is not being utilised. Ideal for Sandwell Youth workers to facilitate an activity.
- Consider a multi-facility for Tenpin Bowling/Ice Skating in West Bromwich/Sandwell.
- Create an outdoor/indoor Skate/Scooter/BMX ramp at Sandwell Valley/Lion Farm Playing fields/Sandwell,
- Young people attend a breakdance/graffiti artist session run by David at Breakmission (www.breakmissioncommunity.com). Cost is £3 per session with reductions for more than one child.
- Young people attend a forest club where they sing at the GAP in West Bromwich.
- Young people attend Go Play sessions and asked for more sessions.

Additional Comments – SHAPE Survey / forum visits

SHAPE survey responses: 78 general responses were received

- The parks referred to were Warley Woods, Lightwoods Park, Haden hill Park, Cradley Heath Park, Netherbrook Primary School Park, Perrys Park, Hurst Green Park, Highfields. Out of Sandwell the following parks were mentioned - Baremore Park, The Dell park, Netherton park, Queens Park, Clent Hills, Woodgate Valley, Howley park, Olive Hill Park, Grove Park
- Youth Clubs – Most responses were left blank or a 'no' which means they don't attend a youth club. Those who did respond stated Five Star community club, 1st Netherton Scouts troop, boys brigade, CAMHS. One person stated the youth club they attended had closed down.
- Leisure Centres – Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Langley, West Bromwich Leisure Centre. Other centres visited include crystal, Halesowen, Harborne, Windley

Appendix 3

Six Towns of Sandwell

Sandwell town profiles and infographic summaries are available through the links below.

<https://www.sandwelltrends.info/sandwell-town-profiles/>

Town	Population	Children (under 16)
Oldbury Bristnall, Langley, Old Warley Oldbury	3 rd highest 52,285 residents 11,479 under 16's 33,499 16-64	26% in poverty 29% first language is not English
Rowley Regis Blackheath, Cradley Heath and Old Hill, Rowley Tividale	4 th Highest 51,255 residents 10,859 Under 16's 31,524 16-64	28% in poverty 14% first language not English
Smethwick Abbey, Smethwick, Soho & Victoria St Paul's	2 nd Highest 60,033 residents 15,680 Under 16's 37,840 16-64	32% in poverty 53% first language not English
Tipton Tipton Green, Princes End Great Bridge	5 th Highest 41,080 residents 9,386 Under 16's 26,065 16-65	35% in poverty 24% first language not English
Wednesbury Friar Park, Wednesbury North Wednesbury South	Lowest 39,160 residents 8,582 Under 16's 24,223 16-64	32% in poverty 24% first language not English
West Bromwich Great Barr with Yew Tree, Greets Green and Lyng, Charlemont with Grove Vale, Hateley Heath, Newton West Bromwich Central	Highest 80,647 residents 17,263 Under 16's 49,999 16-64	28% in poverty 38% first language not English

Voluntary sector funding**Appendix 4**

Breakdown of the Youth Funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20 – this is for both internal and external funding awards.

NAME OF ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY / PROJECT DETAILS	TOWN	Amount
2018-2019			
We Are Bearwood	Skate Board School at Lightwoods Park	Smethwick	£600
Positive Activities Innovative Development	Sports Summer Project	Smethwick	£2,237.94
Positive Activities Innovative Development	Sports Summer Project	Smethwick	£1,959.94
Community Connect Foundation	Duke of Edinburgh Award	Smethwick	£1,870
Krunch	NA	Oldbury	£2,372.40
Stanley's Youth Club	Stanley's Youth Club Musician Sessions	Rowley Regis	£1,500.00
Oakham Evangelical Church	Equipment for Youth Club	Rowley Regis	£574.39
Stanleys Youth Club	Trip	Rowley Regis	£1,396.00
Rowley COG	Rowley Choices	Rowley Regis	£2,788.90
RSA Academy	CSE Workshop	Tipton	£780.00
Complete Kidz CIC	Youth Tipton Summer Activities	Tipton	£3,868.40
Hill Top Youth Club		Wednesbury	£ 2,521.45
Youth Services	Blast application	Wednesbury	£ 1,285.60
Wodensborough Community Amateur Boxing Club	Boxmax - boxing equipment	Wednesbury	£1,719.00
(617) Sandwell Air Scouts	Contribution towards running costs	Wednesbury	£1,250
Childrens	Teamworx	West Bromwich	£2,500.00
Youth Services	Hateley Heath Project	West Bromwich	£514.47

Moose Marial Arts Academy	Karate Wado-Ryu	West Bromwich	£1,739.69
Friends of Yew Tree and Tamebridge	Christmas Pantomine	West Bromwich	£1,134
Latifah Fultali Complex	Homework Club	West Bromwich	£4,838
2019-2020			
Paraochial Church Council of St Hilda, Warley Woods	ST Hildas Youth Group	Smethwick	£1,800.00
Tividale Academy	Girls Football Development	Oldbury	£3,832.37
Old Hill Cricket Club	Cricket Equipment	Rowley Regis	£2,145.00
Shell Corner Youth Company	Photo Art	Rowley Regis	£1,287.11
Tipton Christian Community Church	Teenscene	Tipton	£1,750.00
Time Step Dance	Time to Cheer	Tipton	£1,300.00
Jubilee Jaguars	Sports Club running sessions	Tipton	£1,145.00
SMBC Youth Services	Hill Top Youth Club - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	Wednesbury	£1,173.22
SMBC Youth Services	Hill Top Youth Club - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	Wednesbury	£4,477.95
Creative Academies (based at YMCA)	Just Play - project for outdoor youth activities	Wednesbury	£4,862.64
Friends of Wednesbury Library	Knit and Natter presents Father Christmas at Hilltop Library	Wednesbury	£182.30
SMBC Youth Services	Hateley Heath Youth Project - projects delivered by SMBC Youth Services (non grant)	West Bromwich	£1,009.42
Yemeni Community Centre	Youth project	West Bromwich	£2,995.93
481 Royal Air Cadets (West Bromwich)	Funding contribution towards equipment for Duke of Edinburgh	West Bromwich	£2,441.70

Sandwell Vision Ambitions

	1. Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.
	2. Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.
	3. Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy.
	4. Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.
	5. Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.
	6. We have excellent and affordable public transport that connects us to all local centres and to jobs in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, the airport and the wider West Midlands.
	7. We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.
	8. Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.
	9. Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.
	10. Sandwell now has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's lives and communities.