

## **Lead Member Report to CAHW 14/03/2023**

### **Youth Connect South West**

Youth Connect South West (YCSW) was set up as a public service mutual, with 19 Council staff transferring to the new organisation in November 2019. Since then, YCSW have developed and grown to employ 72 staff with an annual turnover of over £1.5m.

The organisation delivers support in schools and communities across B&NES, and has a strong presence at three key venues:

- Southside Youth Hub
- Bath City Centre Youth Space
- Radstock Youth Hub

YCSW also deliver services in Somerset and North Somerset.

Key achievements of YCSW since 2019:

- Successful delivery of the £2.5million Targeted Youth Support contract for B&NES Council including the delivery of Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) support work (e.g. Youth unemployment network and developing the Your Pathways booklet to all 15/16/17 and 18 years olds).
- Applied for and awarded additional funding of over £1million per annum for additional youth services including:
  - Delivery of open access youth provision funded by parish and town councils, an increase of 500% or 24 sessions a week
  - Partnership with Bath Spa university to deliver community projects
  - Additional pieces of work commissioned by a range of Council teams including a request to provide a response to anti-social behaviour issues.
  - Parish and town council funded youth work sessions in Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton, Timsbury. CIL funded sessions at Foxhill, Twerton, Odd Down, Whiteway and Bath City centre.
- Worked in partnership with Bath College to develop a set of alternative provision courses for the most vulnerable learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) – equivalent of 66 local places for B&NES young people.
- Opened a city centre youth space to enable young people to access support easier. Projects include tackling antisocial behaviour, serious youth violence including violence against women.
- Developed a community wide offer for Whiteway and Twerton through Southside Youth Hub. Services include community events and groups including food programs, soft play, warm space, Tots Connect, older people group, wellbeing and mindfulness, community library and mobile library visits.
- Parish and town council funded outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Led the support for young people and the community after the tragic death of Charley Bates in Radstock

- Provided significant consultancy and enablement activities as part of the Targeted Support contract, including (but not limited to):
  - Support and mentoring to Percy, Batheaston, Wheels for all, Keynsham Town Council, Radical project and town and parish councils.

YCSW are embedded within communities in B&NES and support the wider community and voluntary sector in a range of ways. In 2022/23 and in answer to a shortage of trained youth work professionals, YCSW developed a course in Youth Work in partnership with Bath College. In total, 10 new youth work professionals joined the sector as a result of this.

YCSW's training offer has included delivery of Challenging Behaviour and Trauma Informed Practice to over 90 professions over the last 2 years. They have also offered consultancy and research services on city centre issues, the Mulberry Park development, serious violence and a South Somerset youth work feasibility study.

The following services and pilots have been developed for young people and delivered outside of the B&NES Targeted Youth Support contract:

- West of England Combined Authority (WECA) funded support for young people at risk of NEET through the Realising Talent programme
- Careers advice and transition support for young people with special educational needs and looked after children.
- Grant funded support service for young people with mental health support needs
- Healthwatch funded project carried out by young people to audit existing provision
- Government funded Holiday Activity Food (HAF) program in partnership with Bathscape in 2022/23
- Partnered with Bath College to run Partnerships for Work and Learning for Work education support service providing one to one support for pre-16 young people to help them engage with education including post-16 support
- Independently funded targeted support groups focused on health and wellbeing (e.g. teen yoga)
- Delivery of Wesport funded, free to access sport activities

### **Government Response to the Independent Care Review**

The Government have outlined their response to the Independent Care review with plans that put families at the heart of reform.

There are four outcomes identified that lay the foundations that enable children to thrive:

1. Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
2. Children and young people are supported by their family network
3. Children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes
4. Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes.

There are two system level enablers that will help Children's Social Care to achieve these outcomes:

1. The workforce is equipped and effective

## 2. Leaders drive conditions for effective practice.

In addition to this there are wider outcomes that public services should aspire to e.g. good education and good mental and physical health; it is very clear that this will require a whole council approach that cannot sit solely within Children's Social Care (CSC). This is an ambitious strategy with the potential to transform the current care system to focus on more early support for families, reducing the need for crisis response at a later stage. While the work will start in September 2023 planning is already underway

You can read about the implementation here-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/childrens-social-care-stable-homes-built-on-love>

Council Officers are contributing to a range of consultation response meetings, being led and facilitated by the Association of Directors of Children Services (ADCS) for the CSC reform implementation strategy.

## **Bath & North East Somerset Council celebrating 10 years of Supporting Families**

To celebrate 10 years of the Connecting Families Team funded by the Supporting Families programme, Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Bath and North East Somerset Council, we producing a 10 year celebration newsletter showcasing the journey of the programme in B&NES including the successes and sustained changes that families have achieved.

Since the initiation of the programme in B&NES in 2012:

- 1723 families have achieved positive outcomes through successful plans
- 1365 children have been supported
- 927 adults have been supported

### **Criteria to engage in the programme; families have at least 2 areas of need**



*\*To note the headline criteria has now been extended (as part of the next iteration of the programme) this will enable more detailed reporting on the problems families are facing, clarify what good looks like for these outcomes, and what levels of evidence would be*

expected when measuring these outcomes. To view details of this, please check out the following link: ([Supporting Families: programme guidance 2022-25](#))

Direct feedback from families include:

**Feedback 1:** *He (Keyworker) was like a breath of fresh air and we finally felt someone was listening to us. Over the last five months he has supported our family especially our daughter to look for the positives and not to dwell in the past. He has had a positive impact on our whole family and we truly believe he has been sent to us for a reason. I am pleased to say that our daughter is flourishing she is working hard at school, remaining in class and staying away from trouble. We have attended the parenting classes as a family and entered feeling failures as parents and we have left thinking we haven't done a bad job!.... We would highly recommend The Connecting Families team you are all heroes."*

**Feedback 2:** *"Honestly it really scares me to think where I would be without the support you have given me and my son. I put my trust in the wrong people before and ended up in the worst situation I have ever been in my life. Without your help I would still be in that situation or living in a place where I am scared for the safety of my son and myself. ....All the support from everybody has been amazing, to think where I was in July last year, I was broken and did not know where to turn. I really thought I was going to have to go back to London which was my worst nightmare. Thank you so much to everyone that has helped me to get to where I am now, I am in my new home, my son is doing well at school, and I am happy!"*

**Feedback 3:** *"Meeting our Keyworker has been amazing; she has been a big help for me and really helped me to sort my life out. I am happier, my kids are going to school and my finances are so much better! I am now paying back debts and arrears with repayment plans whereas before I didn't know where to turn and the debt was building and building. Just to say thank you so much for the support from our keyworker she has been amazing, and the kids absolutely love her! You will definitely be missed but I am confident that I got this!!"*

The team have a seconded worker from DWP called a Supporting Families Employment Adviser, she sits alongside the team supporting people with progress to work and ensuring that families impacted by issues of physical and mental health are receiving the correct benefit entitlements and are supported to navigate the benefits system. During the first months of lockdown, she supported parents into work, has one working in a care home kitchen and the another in a local greengrocer's shop. She also supports families with claims for disability benefits and over the course of the programme worked with one family with 3 disabled children who were struggling with debt and in unsuitable housing for their circumstances and were missing out on a large sum of unclaimed benefits. This payment enabled them to clear their housing arrears, all other debts and the benefits awarded also meant they qualified for additional bedrooms for the children, enabling them to relocate to a suitable property.

The Connecting Families Team have identified a range of services which the team works in partnership with key partners, to demonstrate the use of the 'whole family' approach to achieving successful and sustained outcomes for children and their families, these partners include, but are not limited to:

- Bright Start Children Service
- Adult services
- Voluntary sector projects
- Housing support
- Schools
- Integrated working team
- Alcohol & substance misuse services

The team also have a Family Mediation worker and an Afghan refugee worker, and they run regular training course for parents with teenagers to help them parent through the tricky time of parenting young people. The team also run a teenager's group alongside this course to help teenagers develop better communication and negotiation skills, to offer a package of support for families living in B&NES. If you would like to learn more about your local area's work to deliver early help through Connecting Families, and under the impact that the team are making please contact [connecting\\_families@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:connecting_families@bathnes.gov.uk) and look out for the 10 year celebration newsletter showcasing the journey of the programme in B&NES including the successes and sustained changes that families have achieved.

Please see link below to celebrate the 10 year anniversary.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ten-years-of-supporting-families-supporting-families-programme-annual-report-2022-23/ten-years-of-supporting-families-supporting-families-programme-annual-report-2022-23#ministerial-foreword--felicity-buchan-mp>

## **Public Health Updates**

- [Tennis@thepark](#) programme has seen over 27,000 participants take part in community tennis activity (July 2022 – Dec 2022)
- New operators of the Royal Victoria Park Approach Course have been appointed. The new offer will include an 18 hole pitch and put course and new 9 hole footgolf course.
- A £100,000 National Lottery bid by Dragonfly Leisure was successful. Funding will be used to install a new play park and develop community growing spaces at Midsomer Norton Leisure Centre.
- Project Co-ordinator support for the Beat the Streets project which is part of the Active Way, active travel and social prescribing programme in the Somer Valley. Beat the Street is a mass participation outdoor game that aims to encourage active travel. It will take place over a six-week period and will be targeted at children in local primary schools.
- The 2022 Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey data has now been published. Key findings are being shared across the Council and with strategic partners.
- The Holiday Activities and Food Programme has engaged with a total of 2,314 unique children and young people during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2022. Activities included outdoor education, sports camps, drama,

singing, cycling proficiency, technology activities and trips including bowling, cookery classes and theme parks.

- A deep dive has been conducted into B&NES' offer to young people who are at risk of not working or moving into further training or education after school. A set of recommendations are being considered for future development of the offer.
- A multi-agency Infant Feeding Crisis Pathway has been developed, to support the emergency distribution of Infant Formula should parents and carers find themselves in a financial crisis and unable to purchase Infant formula.
- The updated final draft of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board's B&NES Health and Wellbeing Strategy will go to the Board for signoff in March. It has been developed through a collaborative engagement process with the public and stakeholders, and is based on information on the population of B&NES contained in the Strategic Evidence Base.
- The joint Transport and Public Health project to set up an active travel social prescribing Hub in the Somer Valley is on track to offer cycling and walking activities from March. After engaging with communities in the Somer Valley, the name of the project will be "The Active Way" and the central location at the Healthy Living Centre in Radstock will be referred to as "The Active Way Centre". Activities that will be available from March include cycling and walking groups that professionals such as GPs, care coordinators and voluntary and community sector partners can refer patients to. The full range of activities will be available after local elections, when the project will be publicly launched, and including a mass community engagement activity called Beat the Street, whereby residents are encouraged to walk, cycle or wheel to different locations in the Somer Valley to earn points by swiping beat boxes across their community. B&NES Council has partnered with University West of England (UWE), who will be supporting monitoring and evaluation of the 2.5 year pilot project.

### **SEND review – Government response**

The DFE has launched a formal response to the SEND & Alternative Provision green paper, published a year ago. The paper invited all parties to comment on its proposals through a formal consultation. This consultation closed in July 2022.

The government's response to the consultation is now published in an improvement plan that can be accessed below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-alternative-provision-improvement-plan>

In summary, the plan proposes:

- Investing in 33 new special free schools.
- Increasing SEND funding by more than 50% to over £10 billion by 2023-24
- New guides for professionals to help them provide the right support.



- Introducing a standardised and digitised EHCP (Education, Health and Care plans) process and template to minimise bureaucracy and deliver consistency.
- Increasing the number of staff with an accredited SENCo qualification in early years settings.
- Improving the transition to further education by introducing common transfer files and piloting the roll out of adjustment passports to ensure young people with SEND are prepared for employment and higher education.
- Working with Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission to deliver an updated local area SEND inspection framework.

The roadmap document published by the DFE is a helpful start to looking at the detail and when changes will be implemented. This can be found in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-alternative-provision-improvement-plan/send-and-alternative-provision-roadmap>

LA officers are working through this plan and will start to work alongside health/schools/parents & carers to consider what this means for the system in SEND in B&NES

### **B&NES Special School Free School**

In a positive development for the local area, B&NES has succeeded in its bid for a new Free School special school and is one of the 33 areas awarded this provision. The link below takes you to the B&NES media release on this matter.

<https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news/new-school-planned-children-send-bnes>

This successful application is one strand of work that officers in the LA have been working on to support the development of our SEND provision as part of our drive to improve capacity in our local area.

### **Culverhay**

Alongside the successful special school bid, Officers have submitted a new Free School Alternative Provision School application, if successful, this will be located on the site of Culverhay. This application has been delivered in partnership with Midsomer Norton Partnership Trust.

As Lead member for Children's Services, I remain committed to ensuring that Culverhay becomes a campus for education support for our local area. We continue to work with Bath College to develop a Pre-16 centre on the site to enable a better vocational pathway for our children and young people. We are working on all options to find the capital funding to deliver this project and will make this a council priority for WECA funding.

## **Secondary School Admissions**

I am pleased to say that over 91% of parents/carers received their 1<sup>st</sup> choice of secondary school. A comparison against last year's performance is included in the table below.

2023/24		2022/23	
1 <sup>st</sup> Preferences	91.7%	1 <sup>st</sup> Preferences	<b>89.2%</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Preferences	5.6%	2 <sup>nd</sup> Preferences	<b>6.8%</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Preferences	0.9%	3 <sup>rd</sup> Preferences	<b>1.5%</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Preference	0%	4 <sup>th</sup> Preferences	<b>0.2%</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Preference	0%	5 <sup>th</sup> Preferences	<b>0.2%</b>
Referrals	1.8%	Referrals	<b>2.1%</b>

## **SACRE**

Following the Annual report submitted to the panel earlier this year, I am pleased to say that the council has provided an additional 5k to support the work of SACRE in our Local Area. This additional funding will enhance the support the SCARE currently offers to schools to include:

- Schools to be offered 2.5 hour diagnostic to look at curriculum and suggest improvements in ordering and sequencing of knowledge.
- Online training to schools offering subject knowledge webinars to build teacher confidence in teaching key knowledge and progression
- Enabling B@NES schools to visit places of worship through the creation of a Travel Grant Fund to which schools could bid for 50% match funding for Travel costs
- Increase teachers' self-confidence in combatting antisemitism through training event linked to Holocaust Memorial Day

## **Music Service**

As the panel is aware, arrangements are being made for the Music Service in B&NES to join a Tri Hub with South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. Following support from this panel and the submission of a single-member decision, the service is preparing itself for the next stages of joining the West of England Music Alliance (WEMA). Later this month, Arts Council England will provide details on the funding eligibility for areas to re-bid for DFE grants to deliver music services. This is an exciting but busy time for the three music services as they prepare to create a single organisation to deliver the vision for future music services.



