



**SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**INVESTING IN YOUNG PEOPLE**

**2016 - 2018**

**YOUTH STRATEGY – Refresh 2**

**Our children and young people in South Ayrshire have the best possible life chances.**

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## Executive Summary

Youth work has a significant role to play in delivering the broad vision for all Scotland's young people - that they are nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible. Youth work opportunities can also support young people to live their lives as confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens.

In South Ayrshire we recognise the value of youth work in contributing positively to young people's personal growth and to the growth of the communities they live in.

As well as enhancing the lives of young people from all backgrounds, universal and targeted youth work opportunities can have an early intervention and prevention role. Targeted youth work can play a key role in positively engaging those more marginalised, disaffected and disadvantaged young people, and offer them opportunities to become involved in positive and creative outlets to realise their potential. Involvement into positive leisure and recreational opportunities is a key protective factor for young people. These youth work opportunities can also offer vulnerable young people a non-stigmatising route into finding more specialist support where they might not be ready to go directly.

The Youth Strategy embraces all young people, regardless of need and issue, and should be regarded as the overarching policy for youth work and youth provision, encompassing and informing other youth-related strategies and policies including Youth Justice and Anti-Social Behaviour.

This strategy supports growth in the youth work sector in South Ayrshire through a variety of means - more opportunities and influence for young people, commitment to ongoing training and development of youth workers and volunteers, better targeted resources, more access to good facilities and better support for the sector.

Acknowledging the good practice across the South Ayrshire Youth Work sector, the strategy aims to build on this, to ensure provision for young people is forward-looking, well-resourced and supported effectively and delivering the best possible outcomes for young people in South Ayrshire.

In line with the Scottish Government/COSLA Statement of Ambition, (15 March 2012), community planning arrangements will provide the foundation for effective partnership working through an increased focus on prevention and securing continuous improvement in service delivery, in order to achieve better outcomes for young people.

## Introduction

Youth work has a major part to play in providing life-enhancing experiences for children and young people - and the learning and development opportunities it offers are valued as an integral part of what society provides for young people across the board - children's services, school education, post-school education and training.

We recognise this can only be realised if all professionals at all levels, working with children and young people pull together to plan and deliver top-quality services, which overcome traditional boundaries. We want young people to be given the opportunity to be involved in this process by giving them a voice and say in issues that affect their lives, valuing their contribution and investing in their future.

We view the development of top quality services for young people as an invaluable investment for securing a better future.

*\*In a study, carried out by the Cognitive Centre Foundation into 197 risk assessments for young people in South Ayrshire, they found "Overall for both males and females interactions with anti-social peers and a lack of opportunity/inclination in relation to leisure and recreation are the two most frequently reported areas of need" - that is, in nearly 60% of cases the lack of opportunity/involvement in leisure & recreation was a significant factor in relation to their offending issues. (Peter Davies, Cognitive Centre Foundation, 2007)*

Putting the needs of young people first, we have ensured young people have been involved in developing this strategy. Young people have told us what they want from youth services. This process has placed high value on the rights of young people.

Our vision is that South Ayrshire will be a place where young people: -

- Have opportunities to develop their skills and talents and be the best they can be
- Are valued as active participants in their community and society at large
- Are able to release their energy and creativity through exciting and challenging experiences
- Have high aspirations for themselves and their peers
- Take increasing levels of responsibility for themselves and for others and learn to manage risk
- Make choices which help their personal, social, physical and cultural development and are right for them and
- Will readily find support and experiences, which will help them develop the resilience needed for adult life, especially if they are vulnerable

The primary focus of the strategy is on the 11 years to 19 years age group with a particular emphasis on the key transition stages from child to adult, leaving school and going to work, training or further education.

The strategy provides a framework to:

- Involve young people in the design of services
- Maximise the use of resources and ensure equality of opportunity particularly for the more marginalised
- Identify gaps in provision
- Make best use of specialist skills and experience
- Share good practice through training and networking
- Provide integrated responses to those young people who are most disengaged and those who require additional support achieve better outcomes
- Seek funding opportunities in a collaborative way that avoids competing interests and ensures a co-ordinated approach to the needs of the young people in South Ayrshire
- Plan and deliver services at a local level

## **Policy Context and Underpinning Principles**

South Ayrshire Council embraces the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child, which sets out a number of rights of young people, including the right to:

Be involved in decisions that affect them (article 12)

The fullest education to prepare for adult life (article 29)

Leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities (article 31)

All of which are underpinned by the principle that these apply irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality and operate in non-discriminatory ways (article 2)

The strategy confirms the values of Respect, Honesty, Responsibility, Equality and Compassion and takes direction from a range of Policies and guidance that include:

- Valuing Young People: Principles and Connections to Support Young People to Achieve their Potential
- Bridging the Gap: Improving Outcomes for Scotland’s Young People through School and Youth Work Partnerships
- Skills for Scotland
- A Curriculum For Excellence’
- “Getting it right for every child”
- CLD National Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships
- Achieving our potential: A framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland
- Equally Well
- Towards a mentally flourishing Scotland
- Post 16’s Policy and Practice Framework
- More Choices, More Chances
- Youth Justice – Preventing Offending by Young People: A Framework for Action
- Children and Young people’s Bill 2013 (proposed)
- South Ayrshire Integrated Children’s service plan 2013 (proposed)

It delivers the priorities of the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership to close the opportunity gap, through strategic and local planning arrangements which reflect the needs and aspirations of young people and acknowledges the role that they can play in developing and delivering services

The following principles will therefore underpin the work of all partners and stakeholders and will inform the delivery of services:

- Putting young people at the centre of our work.
- A positive view of young people, which celebrates the contribution young people can make in their community and the wider society.
- Collaborative practice where organisations work together to provide more opportunities and support for young people.
- Listening to young people to hear what they really need and want and to support their development.
- Involvement of young people and engagement in decision-making and in service delivery.
- Access for all regardless of ability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.
- Sharing knowledge, information, resources, jointly identifying needs and support for community capacity building.
- Focus on points of transition.
- Involve local communities to invest in young people.
- Focus on young people’s development recognising both formal and informal learning.

**Outcomes of the Strategy**

The specific outcomes of the strategy are:

1. Young people to be able to benefit from youth work opportunities, which make a real difference to their lives through:
  - youth work activities, open to any young person who wishes to attend, offered by local authorities and voluntary organisations; and
  - targeted and specialised provision designed to meet the needs of young people who are particularly vulnerable or who have specific needs.

2. Engagement and consultation with young people to enable them to gain a voice and influence the delivery of services that affect their lives.
3. A youth work sector equipped and empowered to achieve positive outcomes for young people.

## 1. Young people to be able to benefit from youth work opportunities

The strategy recognises the entitlement of young people to a wide range of opportunities and support to develop their personal and social skills. Those young people who are disaffected or hardest to reach will benefit from a targeted approach and access to specialist services. (See appendix 1) Young people are entitled to opportunities to: -

- develop their skills, resilience and confidence through participation in effective youth work opportunities
- enable them to have their voice heard through democratic processes and collective decision making, as individual citizens and consumers
- engage in a wide range of recreational activities in good quality facilities which are affordable, accessible and meet their needs
- meet other young people socially in a safe and pleasant environment
- contribute to living in a safe and pleasant environment
- experience the world of work and volunteering
- receive advice, guidance and support in respect of a wide range of personal issues
- obtain information on issues important to them
- be involved regardless of age, sex, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, political or religious beliefs
- have their achievements recognised and gain qualifications that are not available in schools
- have fun
- benefit from coordinated service delivery by services working together

Long Term Outcomes: Our Children and Young people are confident and successful learners who have the skills for learning, work and life.

Intermediate Outcomes:

- The wider achievement of children and young people is improved/ More children and young people are successful learners and achieve more widely
- Young people have increased motivation to take up healthy living opportunities (ref: Healthy Weight Strategy) / Young people are healthier and experience fewer risks as result of alcohol and drug use (ref: South Ayrshire ADP Strategy)

Short term Outcome: Young People are able to benefit from opportunities which make a real difference in their lives

## **2. Engagement and consultation with young people**

South Ayrshire Council and partners are committed to engagement and consultation with young people.

The South Ayrshire Youth Forum and the MSYP's will provide the basis for this high-level consultation. They will be tasked with ensuring that they also seek representation from young people particularly those who are not currently represented or who may be marginalised. Through the Youth Forum issues will be identified and changes made in strategic planning and the delivery of local services. This will provide the mechanism by which the Council and its partners engage with young people to inform policy development and service delivery.

The South Ayrshire Youth Forum will consult with young people from existing consultative structures; South Ayrshire Youth Forum, the Young Carers Forum, the Young People's Disability Forum, the Pupil's Forum, MSYP's, Looked After Young People and Children in Need, South Ayrshire Access to Sport and other voluntary sector groups.

The Youth Forum will be encouraged to reconfigure its structures to reflect community planning structures and themes. The forum will promote active citizenship, peer development, participation by young people, access to information and the development of issue based youth action groups.

### **Youth Strategy Improvement Plan Outcomes**

Long Term Outcomes:

- Our Children and Young people are respected, responsible and included.

Intermediate Outcomes:

Young People have an influence on developing and shaping their services in the community

- Children and young people become more confident and more engaged in their community

Short Term Outcomes:

- Our Children and young people are engaged and consulted. They have a voice and influence on service delivery which affects their lives.

## **3. A youth work sector equipped and empowered to achieve positive outcomes for young people**

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

The arrangements by which the Strategy will deliver on its aims and develop better outcomes for young people are set out in this section.

South Ayrshire Council will provide strategic leadership and co-ordination. The Council will promote the Youth Strategy through departmental service plans and encourage reconfiguration of internal and external budgets to support this process and ensure best value.

The Council 's Youth Strategy Officer and political "Youth Champion" will promote young people's involvement in neighbourhood planning and service delivery that links to Community Planning. This approach will result in the development of local Youth Action Plans based on a rigorous assessment of need as an integral part of Learning Community Partnerships.

#### **(a) Strategic Leadership and Co-ordination**

The Youth Strategy Implementation Group will operate at a strategic level with direct links to the Officer Locality Group (OLG) for children and young people and will be responsible for the development and implementation of the strategy by: -

- Supporting the monitoring and effectiveness of local youth action planning and evaluation processes.
- Standardising planning, evaluation and implementation of quality improvement.
- Ensuring best value by configuring budgets innovatively and strategically.
- Developing joint protocols for information sharing, training and deployment of staff with a particular emphasis on child protection requirements.
- Investing in the development of an ethos and culture of participation and capacity building programmes for staff, voluntary sector and young people to enable them to contribute as equal partners.

It will include in its membership Senior Council Officers and senior staff from partner organisations from a wide range of services which impact directly on young people. The Implementation Group will have a direct link to the community planning process through the OLG. In addition, each of the thematic planning groups within the community plan will have a direct link to the youth strategy implementation group for the purpose of consulting and engaging young people in improving services.

The Youth Strategy Officer will have responsibility for: -

- Promoting a culture where young people are consulted about services that impact on their lives.
- Assisting in the development and production of local youth action plans which co-ordinate local authority developments with community aspirations and link with youth groups and clubs, leisure, arts/culture, integrated community/health promoting and active schools, outdoor education, youth diversionary programmes, youth information and consultation services and other specialist services.
- Developing capacity within local communities and the voluntary sector to deliver youth activities and the funding for grant aided voluntary organisations.
- Identifying and prioritising South Ayrshire wide youth issues and for these to be considered by the South Ayrshire Youth Forum and the Community Planning Partnership.
- Engaging corporate services.
- In conjunction with Service Managers, prepare reports to address potential issues for Elected Member and or Community Planning Partnership approval.
- Ensuring resources are co-ordinated to achieve best value for young people.

### **Youth Strategy Improvement Plan Outcomes**

Long Term Outcome:

- Our Children and Young people are confident and successful learners who have the skills for learning, work and life.

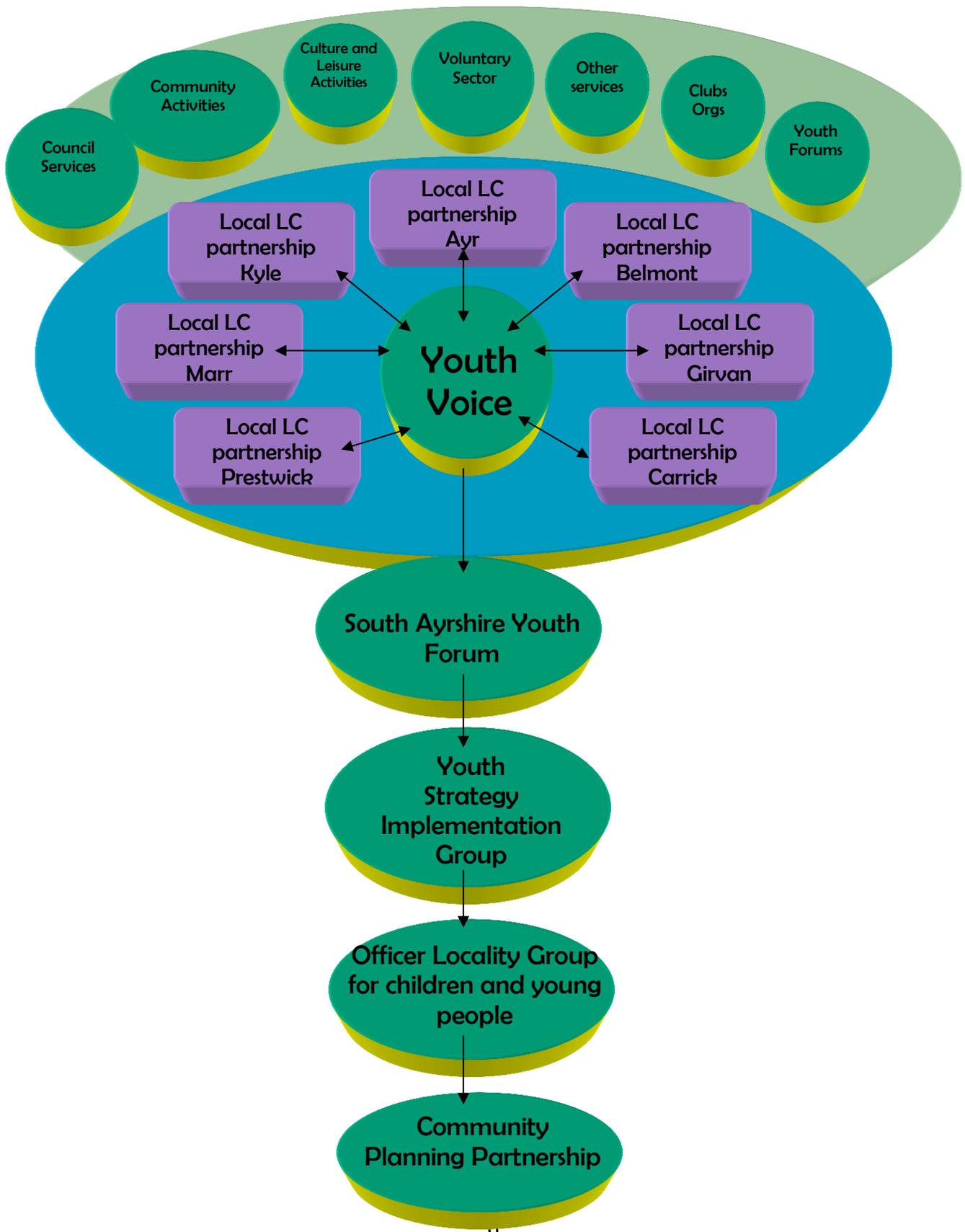
Intermediate Outcome:

- An effective workforce and improved performance

Short Term Outcome:

- A youth work sector equipped and empowered to achieve positive outcomes for young people

# Enabling young people to participate in the design and delivery of services



## **(b) Local Youth Action planning and Learning Community Partnerships**

Local Youth Action Plans will be developed which are based on an assessment of need and in consultation with young people, through Learning Community Partnerships. The plans will be informed by young people and include:

- Setting clear targets and timescales for activities that reflect the aims and opportunities for young people as outlined in this strategy.
- Identifying monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the outcomes and impact achieved.
- Developing the capacity within local community groups and organisations by providing training with particular emphasis on health and safety and child protection issues.
- Supporting the development of local programmes through access to resources, equipment and to the Council's grants to Voluntary Organisations.
- Linking to local and national networks and opportunities.

Local Action Planning and delivery processes will raise strategic planning issues, requiring policy and resource decisions within services and may include: -

- Letting of premises
- Access to leisure facilities
- Rural transport
- Use of open spaces

## **(c) Workforce Development**

Local Youth Action Planning will impact on services by working with partner organisations to identify the changes needed in the way in which they currently respond to identify need. This includes not just what is provided, but how it is provided. A workforce development programme will be offered for managers and frontline staff to enable them to: -

- Have respect for and know how to listen to and engage with young people
- Have the responsibility and flexibility to respond to local needs.
- Build capacity within the voluntary sector and help communities respond to the needs of their young people
- Understand the Philosophy of the Youth Strategy and the Culture to be expected by the Council and its partner organisation.
- Embrace appropriate and safe use of social media for staff and young people
- Gain accreditation and progression to further learning as appropriate

The aim is to develop a competent youth work sector that is value-based, has relevant technical skills which links to self-evaluation processes and standards

## **Financial and Resource Considerations**

### **a) Prevention And Early Intervention**

To adequately resource and fund services will be an obvious challenge and will require an imaginative and creative use of resources, perhaps with a reconfiguration and re-prioritising of existing budgets. There is a growing awareness of this both locally and nationally, with recent calls to address the funding shortfalls in youth work that have occurred over the last decade or so. There is an overwhelming "spend to save" argument associated with the provision of quality youth work and youth services. The Christie commission identified the need for prevention and early Intervention a one of the four pillars of public reform.

By being open to all, giving young people a place to go, to socialise with peers, have a voice and influence through the support of positive adult role models, these opportunities provide diversionary activity for some of the most vulnerable and hard to reach young people in our communities. Unfortunately not every community benefits, as resources have to be targeted, but those that do see young people developing new skills, confidence, resilience and changes in behaviour.

All of these factors impact on the likelihood or otherwise of children and young people requiring the support of more specialist costly provision, either from a Local Authority perspective or in relation to health and youth justice.

Appendix 2 provides some examples of cost benefit analysis. These are examples of the type and range of provision that can be costed as on a “value for money” and “spend to save” basis, underpinned by a value base which sees the current and future wellbeing of children and young people worthy of investment, and going beyond any financial gains for the Council in the longer term.

Adding together the resource implications for a range of quality services and supports for young people and balancing this against the longer-term costs is a key factor in enabling the Youth Strategy to be driven forward. This investment requires vision and commitment from budget holders and key decision makers.

## **Reporting Arrangements**

The Officer Locality group for children and young people will take the lead responsibility for ensuring that there is corporate support for the Youth Strategy Implementation Group and that the strategy is implemented and monitored.

A twice-yearly report will be provided from the Youth Strategy Implementation Group that will identify progress related to the key performance outcomes of the Single Outcome agreement

Promoting continuous improvement through self-evaluation at all levels, the six high level questions in the Quality Improvement Framework for Integrated Services for Children and Young People will be used to help evaluate services.

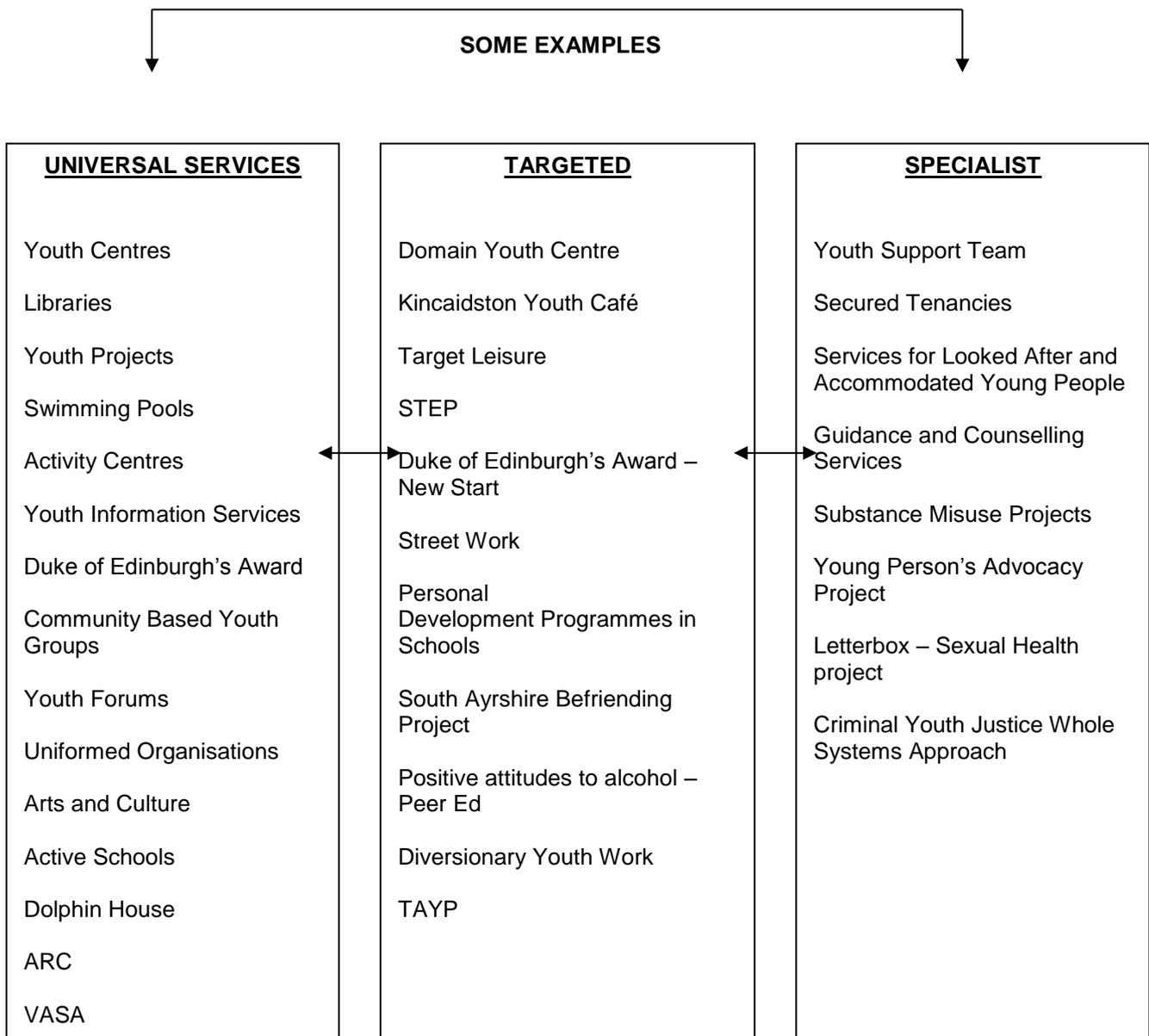
Young people will be involved in the design and implementation of evaluation and reporting process.

Local Action Plans will use local baseline information to enable local targets to be effectively set and measured. Included in the baseline information will be information on services at a local level from partner organisations.

South Ayrshire wide information relating to young people’s wider achievement, safety and health will be analysed and reported on an annual basis.

**Appendix 1 – Universal, targeted and specialist services**

The strategy recognises the entitlement of young people to a wide range of opportunities and support to develop their personal and social skills. Those young people who are disaffected or hardest to reach will benefit from a targeted approach and access to specialist services.



## Appendix 2 Cost Benefit Analysis

At Scotland's first "Children's Summit" in Edinburgh in June 2010 Mike Russell stated "with spending getting tighter, we need to look long and hard at how we accelerate work in early years to build better lives for our children and reduce the need for more costly, crisis interventions later on, such as putting young people into residential or secure care or dealing with the impact of youth offending. The evidence shows that where we work together, we can improve the lives of children and make public services more efficient too. Every pound invested in early years ultimately saved taxpayers up to £7."

### Offending behaviour

High tariff specialist resources for young people, involved in offending behaviour for example, or who require to be accommodated and educated in out with authority provision, can cost on average £700+ per day; that is approximately £5000 a week, amounting to £250,000 per year for a single placement.

### Anti Social Behaviour

The alarmingly high cost of controlling violent or threatening behaviour by teenagers emerged when the Scottish Government stated that anti social behaviour orders for under 16 year olds were costing the public £500,000 each. (Source: BBC News)

Evidence for South Ayrshire Community Safety research has shown that diversionary activity works. The statistics show that when diversionary activity is targeted effectively, young people are less likely to be involved in criminal activity, fewer complaints are made about anti social behaviour and communities feel safer.

### Cost of underage drinking

Patients under 16 years admitted to Ayr hospital with a diagnosis of alcohol misuse and patients under 16 years presented at Ayr Hospital A & E without admission as a result of alcohol misuse cost NHS Ayrshire & Arran £41,893 from 2007 – 2009. (Source: NHS Ayrshire and Arran response to freedom of information request)

### Fire and Rescue

"South Ayrshire had 646 recorded fire related anti-social behaviour incidents during 2009, predominately involving youth fire setting. The social, economic and environmental costs are extremely high and at peak times place an unacceptable strain upon the finite operational resources of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue." William Davidson, Group Commander, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue

The total cost for malicious calls, secondary fires and open hydrants in 2009 came to a massive £1,153,372 in South Ayrshire. (Source: Review of service reform in Scottish Fire & Rescue Authorities prepared accounts for Accounts Commission by Audit Scotland)

### Vandalism

Vandalism can give the impression that an area is unmanaged and out of control: seeing an area treated with disrespect makes everyone feel uneasy when they are out and about because it sends out the message that this is an area that no one cares about.

From 2007 to 2009, vandalism cost £146,576 for South Ayrshire Council buildings alone. (Source: South Ayrshire Council – Corporate Repairs Account)

## Health

The benefits of access to leisure and cultural facilities go far beyond physical fitness. It is acknowledged that wider societal, environmental and economic benefits will be gained from getting the Scottish population more active. There is increasing recognition that people's health and wellbeing is influenced by a range of interconnecting factors. Indeed, the World Health Organization suggested over 50 years ago that health is a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely an absence of disease or infirmity. This definition acknowledges that good health and wellbeing are reliant on an array of multiple factors, not just physical, but also psychological and social.

Dr Harry Burns, the Chief Medical Officer interviewed for the Holyrood magazine on 25 June 2010 on the need to adopt a health asset model of health improvement -

He explains: "The deficits model basically says, 'you are no good at this so we have come to do it for you,' and it leaves people disempowered and passive. Whereas there is lots of evidence now that actively involving people in decision making and so on is very health improving and health creating."

By way of example, Burns describes a recent television documentary that focused on one man's efforts to turn a group of young people who had no experience of singing - or more accurately had had no opportunity to learn- into a choir.

"It was teaching people that they had a talent," explains Burns. "Ordinary people who thought of themselves as being worthless suddenly found that they had a talent and it was a talent that connected them with other people. It was a talent that brought them happiness, and so on, and it seemed to transform lives."

While he insists he is not proposing that we go out and teach everyone to sing, although music is a particular passion of his, he says "the point is that if you concentrate on building capacity in individuals and communities and empower them to take control of their lives, health and wellbeing will improve".

"There is a lot of evidence now that actively involving young people in decision making and so on is very health improving and health creating. (We should) start talking about life improvement because everything we do in life contributes to our sense of wellbeing and, therefore, we should be thinking about what does that." What contributes to our sense of wellbeing is not just "holidays and chocolates," he says, adding that if individuals understand the world they live in and find life worthwhile, manageable and comprehensible then they are more likely to value it and choose healthy behaviours."

## Acknowledgements / Consultation.

South Ayrshire Youth Forum

South Ayrshire Pupils S1-S6

South Ayrshire Youth groups – Universal, targeted and Specialist services

VASA

ARC

South Ayrshire Council

## Youth Strategy Implementation plan 2016 -18

### Aim 1: Young people are able to benefit from opportunities which make a real difference to their lives.

Actions	Indicators
<p>Promote and deliver inclusive community based opportunities for young people that support overall health and wellbeing.</p>	Increase in the number of young people accessing targeted youth work activities
	Increase in opportunities that are equal and inclusive and meet the needs of the protected characteristics. (Key focus on rural and SIMD communities, and increase activity for LGBT, Mental Health and disability)
	Increase in numbers of Young people accessing affordable sport and leisure opportunities
	Increased % of S1 and S6 pupils understanding the effects of alcohol and peer pressure
	Embed NPS and substance misuse programmes and mental health awareness in youth provision.
	Increased knowledge of sexual health issues (information, where to get advice)
<p>Deliver a range of experiences that equips young people with employability skills</p>	In partnership with DWP, Colleges, schools and voluntary sector deliver accredited and non-accredited learning and work experience programmes.
	Mapping services for young people to CfE experiences and outcomes

	Embed skills for employment within youth activity delivered within senior phase
Continue to recognise and accredit young people's learning/Provide opportunities to gain youth accreditation.	Increase the number of young people gaining Dynamic Youth, Youth Achievement, DofE and Saltire Awards.
	Increase in partners delivering awards and moderating.
Develop progression pathways for children and young people from targeted groups through services an into employment	Quality of evidence and sharing of information improved
	The progression of young people is tracked and evidenced
<b>Aim 2: Our Children and young people are engaged and consulted. They have a voice and influence on service delivery which affects their lives</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Provide opportunities for young people to feel safe within their communities	Young people are aware of their safety and their responsibilities on line
	Young people have an increased understanding of Hate Crime and how to report it.
	Implement SA Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan
Provide opportunities for young people to influence their groups and clubs/services	Measure % of young people who influence services
	Evidence activities organised and being delivered by young people.
Develop more leadership and volunteering opportunities	Increase in young people becoming leaders and volunteering in their club or group

Deliver a range of opportunities for formal and informal engagement with services in SA communities	Strengthened links with SAYF members, MSYPs with the community planning processes and with local youth workers and groups
	Promotion of the SYP, elections and right to vote
	Strengthened links with Elected members
	Young people are being engaged in review of public services and community
Young Scot services that impact on youth information	Evidence of impact of Young Scot NEC cards and points and rewards
	Increase in services offering points and rewards including employability services and youth clubs.
	<b>Joint work with Licensing and Trading standards is effective</b>
<b>Aim3: A youth work sector equipped and empowered to achieve positive outcomes for young people</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Support and build the skills/capacity of community/3 <sup>rd</sup> sector groups delivering services.	Groups and organisations delivering Youth work, are supported and are active partners in delivering services
	Organisations have improved communication links with Education
Offer appropriate CPD opportunities in response to local and national priorities	Number of youth strategy partners accessing training jointly developed in response to need.
	Training needs audit developed to identify future training requirements
Planning monitoring and evaluation will be consistent, outcome focussed and fit for purpose.	Standard reporting template for Youth Strategy Partners including awards and targeted engagement.

	Quality Assurance systems are fit for purpose recording of impact and participation, in particular for looked after young people in youth work
	Success stories shared
Coordination of resources to ensure best value	Locality planning of services (prioritise joint planning with Youth Justice, LAC, Health and Social Work and School named person)
	Joint protocols for deployment of sessional staff are developed
	Partnership approach for youth work funding applications are agreed
	A system is in place for sharing equipment and resources