

**Briefing to:** Sefton Community Safety Partnership  
**Briefing from:** Chris White Localities Team Manager  
**Date:** Dec 2021  
**Subject:** Youth Service  
**Prepared by:** Angela Robinson, Sue Logie - Sefton Youth Team

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## **1 Introduction**

The chair of the Community Safety Partnership requested at the September meeting a report be prepared on Sefton Council's Youth service and youth engagement mechanisms.

## **2 Sefton Council has a youth team of 2 full time workers (Senior worker and Youth Worker) and 12 part time workers (delivering outreach work post 5pm).**

The outreach teams cover five nights a week in the community across the Borough. The teams try to engage, and signpost young people seen in parks and other areas of the community to local activities or groups. The team will also respond to reports of groups of young people who have been identified as possibly causing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The advantage of the team working post 5pm is that they can build up a picture of what may be happening in that community. The team focuses on criminal exploitation, Gun and Knife crime and staying safe projects, staff give out leaflets and information to local businesses and fast-food outlets and offer advice and support to young people. When ASB is occurring the teamwork within these areas with intervention and prevention advice. All the intelligence gathered is shared with partners (police, fire service, ASB team and managers). Included in the post 5pm work is the deployment of the Youth Bus 4 nights per week focusing on hotspot youth ASB areas and areas that do not offer the traditional youth club setting. The youth bus is equipped with games consoles, computers, and other activities.

The Council Youth Service holds a license to deliver Duke of Edinburgh, and we have several schools and small organisations who also come under that license.

The Team run an LGBTQAI+ session which is a closed session and is referral based to allow it to keep as a safe space, especially as staff are aware not all

young people can be who they are at home. The session is still just a youth session, it just has the added element of being a closed space for you people who are all similar.

The Youth team are an integral part of 'Operation Bangor'. They work with the commissioned youth providers and Active Sefton to put together and deliver a program of diversionary activities for the two-week period between Mischief Night and Bonfire Night.

As part of the youth offer across the borough the Council commissions providers to deliver sessions and activities. The organisations that we commission are:

- Bootle Youth and Community Centre
- Brunswick Youth Centre
- Litherland Youth and Community Centre
- Netherton Park Community Centre
- Parenting 2000 (Crosby and Southport)
- Sefton CVS (\*SYMBOL and Youth Voice)
- Sing Plus
- SPACE (MYA)
- St Leonards Youth and Community Centre
- Woodvale and Ainsdale Community Association
- YCP
- YKids

\*Sefton Youth Making opportunities with Leaders (SYMBOL) offers young people the chance to play an active role in their community, with a direct line of communication with leaders such as councillors and senior managers at Sefton Council. We encourage all of the commissioned groups to attend SYMBOL and also extend an invite to non-commissioned organisations and Schools.

Schools are the key to engaging with young people. The youth team will work closely with education settings and create programs that will educate young people in healthy relationships and safe activities.

There are two cases studies below, that demonstrate how the team try to adapt to the need of the borough and also support communities as best as we can to achieve the best outcomes for young people, even if sometimes we are out of our 'usual' remit of age range.

### 3. Case Studies:

#### 3.1 Summer Reading Project August 2021

Over the summer period, the Youth Service supported Cllr Atkinson and Aintree Community Centre along with Library Services in delivering a reading project. The project was aimed at primary school children who may have been identified as needing some extra support after missing so much school due to the pandemic. This project ran for a number of days through the week with the children taking part in different activities. The days we supported the project the children created their own story book, enjoyed story time with the Library Services and then free play. Youth Service staff supported all three activities, engaging with the children building relationships with them and encouraging them in the activities. In doing this, we started to see confidence building within the children. There was one young man, he was the only male as part of the group who was shy, by youth staff engaging him through play activities (dry beer pong) his confidence started to build and therefore enabled him to be confident in speaking and engaging with others.

The children were aged from around 3/4 - 10/11. This is not an age range we would predominately work with, however we wanted to support this project and offer the young people support.

Overall, we did see over the period of time we were there and engaged with the young people we seen them grow in confidence through 'play' by the end of the program at the Graduation, it was noted and spoken about by Cllr Atkinson the growth she had seen in the young people.

This was a good project to be a part of and it was great to see that our skills were still useful even with such a young age group.

### **3.2 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Criminal activity - Bowersdale Park - August 2021**

We were asked to deploy into Bowersdale Park after there had been reports of ASB and Criminal activity in and around the park and shops.

Bowersdale Park is synonymous for OCG groups, the Youth Bus spent two nights per week for two weeks and there was very little or no engagement. Although there were young people and families in the park area enjoying the green space when disruptive young people arrived families would disperse. Our team noticed young people who appeared to be being 'groomed' into a gang, one young person did attempt to engage with staff and the youth bus, but was called back by the group.

The purpose of the youth bus deployment was to be a diversion/deterrent to displace the anti-social group from that area. Unfortunately, due to the level of tension and the threatening activity in the area towards staff it was impossible to engage with the young people.

What these two projects and the pandemic have identified is the outlook for youth work has changed significantly.