

CHILDREN AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	10 September 2026
REPORT OF	Ann-Marie Matson, Director of Children's Services
SUBJECT	Youth Offer (Youth Diversion/Youth Club Provision)
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

In the context of stronger communities, nurturing our children and building their future is one of the core priorities within the refreshed Council Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on North East Lincolnshire's local response to the national Youth Matters Strategy and the development of the emerging North East Lincolnshire Youth Offer Strategy 2026–2030. It summarises the work undertaken to understand local youth provision, strengthen partnership governance, improve the visibility and accessibility of the youth offer, and connect this work with wider council and partnership activity on prevention, outreach and youth diversion.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

This report seeks to update scrutiny panel members on the local response to the National Youth Strategy, with a focus on the development of a local youth strategy, strengthened governance, local priorities, local provision and the local authority offer. It also highlights how this work links with youth justice prevention and diversion, outreach activity and the wider ambition to ensure young people have trusted adults, safe places to go, meaningful things to do and a stronger voice in shaping local support.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1. The Government's Youth Matters Strategy sets out a ten-year national vision for young people, focused on trusted adults, safe places to go, meaningful opportunities and young people being seen and heard. North East Lincolnshire's local response is being developed through the emerging Youth Offer Strategy 2026/30. This translates those national priorities into a local framework that is shaped by young people and through engagement with providers, schools, police, youth justice, family help, health, public health and voluntary and community sector partners.
- 1.2. As part of the engagement activity, a youth provision survey was undertaken and referenced through the youth round table events to better understand the scope of the current local offer. The survey asked providers who they are,

what activities they deliver, which age groups and groups of young people they support, where provision takes place, how young people find out about it, how it is funded and how sustainable it is.

- 1.3. Responses from providers across the borough showed a broad and varied offer, including youth clubs, sport, creative arts, play, mentoring, outreach, informal education, skills, wellbeing and targeted support. The strongest concentration of provision is for young people aged 12 to 16, with opportunities to further develop provision for younger children and older young people. Provision is geographically spread across Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham, with most activity taking place during weekdays and scope to consider how provision outside weekday activity could be further developed. Providers also reported a generally inclusive offer, including provision accessible to young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and activity targeted towards specific groups.
- 1.4. Local engagement and youth provision survey work show that there is already a varied and valued youth offer across the borough. Young people accessing provision report feeling safer, more confident, better supported with their mental health, able to gain new skills and more aspirational about their futures.
- 1.5. However, the insight also shows that there are further opportunities to strengthen visibility, join up the offer and ensure it is consistently accessible for all young people. Areas for further development include awareness of what is available, accessibility, transport, affordability, workforce capacity, provision for older young people, inclusion, consistent pathways and sustainability.
- 1.6. The emerging local strategy therefore focuses on strengthening what works, improving access and communication, supporting trusted relationships, and developing clearer governance through the refreshed Youth Alliance and new Youth Partnership Board.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1. The key consideration is ensuring that the youth offer is experienced by all young people as visible, connected and easy to access, particularly where geography, transport, affordability, confidence or awareness may influence participation. Strengthening this will help maximise the impact of existing provision and increase opportunities for earlier support, positive activity and diversion from risk.
- 2.2. The opportunity is to use the national strategy, the local Youth Offer Strategy and strengthened governance to create a more coherent, visible and preventative youth system.
- 2.3. Capacity has been identified to support the development and implementation of the youth strategy, enhance wider youth voice activity and mechanisms, and develop stronger interfaces with the strengthened outreach offer. This will support more targeted engagement and intervention with young people in

particular areas, build trusted relationships and raise awareness of the youth offer. It will also help young people to access support, engage in positive activities and make more positive choices.

As such, this will enable closer alignment between universal youth provision, targeted outreach, family help, community safety and the Youth Justice Plan.

- 2.4. The securing of an independent chair for the Youth Alliance, alongside the new governance arrangements, provides further opportunity to strengthen partnership ownership and support collective challenge, coordination and influence. This will help shape the development of a more diversified youth offer that better reflects local need, provider strengths and young people's voices.
- 2.5. From a council perspective, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award forms an important part of the local authority offer and provides an opportunity to develop a more targeted approach for vulnerable groups, supporting confidence, skills, positive relationships and diversionary activity.
- 2.6. There are also opportunities to develop the Family Hubs model to enhance the offer for older young people, particularly where this can strengthen access to trusted adults, early support, positive activity and clear routes into wider provision.
- 2.7. Links with the Youth Justice Plan are particularly important in strengthening prevention, out-of-court diversion, deferred prosecution, education and employment pathways, and positive activities for young people at risk of offending, exploitation or disengagement.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. Communication will be important in ensuring partners, providers, families and young people understand both the existing youth offer and the direction of travel. The work to refresh the Youth Alliance, establish the Youth Partnership Board and develop the Youth Offer Strategy provides a positive message about partnership, prevention and young people's voice. Communication should remain clear and proportionate, recognising both the strengths of current youth provision and the opportunity to further improve visibility, access and coordination.
- 3.2. Ongoing engagement through social media, provider networks, schools, youth settings, community activity and face-to-face opportunities will help ensure young people know what is available and can influence what happens next. Public messaging should emphasise that the council and partners are building on local assets, strengthening outreach and early help, and aligning youth provision with wider activity to keep young people safe, included and able to thrive.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

- 4.2. The development of the emerging local Youth Offer Strategy and associated governance will help inform future decisions about how existing resources, partnership contributions and any external funding opportunities can be aligned to support delivery. Any proposals requiring additional council investment or changes to resources would be subject to the appropriate decision-making and financial governance processes.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The implications for young people are central to this report. A clearer and more connected youth offer will help more young people know where to go, who to talk to and what opportunities are available. The local insight shows that good youth provision can improve feelings of safety, confidence, mental health, skills and aspiration.
- 5.2. The developing strategy aims to extend these benefits by improving access, reducing barriers, strengthening trusted adult relationships, creating more inclusive and age-appropriate opportunities, and embedding young people's voice in delivery and accountability.
- 5.3. Stronger links with outreach and youth justice diversionary activity will also support earlier help, positive activity and strengthened protective relationships for young people who may benefit from additional support.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications.

7. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

The work across Children's Services, through the Youth Strategy, and the development and implementation of our Youth Offer, links into the NEL as a Marmot place workstream where appropriate, though there are no direct implications associated with this report.

8. MONITORING COMMENTS

This report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

9. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards impacted

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Ann-Marie Matson, Director of Children's Services

ANN-MARIE MATSON

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES