

The background of the cover is a complex, abstract geometric pattern composed of various shades of purple and magenta, creating a sense of depth and movement through overlapping shapes and lines.

2019/20 Planned spending on youth services

September 2019

Technical note

Background

Youth services have long been a cornerstone in our communities, providing young people with somewhere to go, something to do and someone to speak to. However, as local authorities struggle with the weight of the funding pressures they are under, youth services are increasingly being forced to bear the brunt of the cuts.

In 2010/11, Local Authorities spent an estimated £1.18bn on youth services across England. While this figure has declined dramatically in the subsequent years, the scale of the cuts had largely gone unnoticed in the public and political consciousness until stories of increasing mental health difficulties, rising in knife crime and growing loneliness and isolation among young people hit the headlines.

Previous research conducted by YMCA found that local authorities had cut funding to youth services in England by 65% between 2010/11 and 2017/18. This is the equivalent to a reduction of £768m by 2017/18.ⁱ

In 2017/18 Local Authorities in England reported spending £416m on youth services. This was a reduction of £32m on the previous year (2016/17), equivalent to a 7% reduction, illustrating that the cuts show no sign of relenting.ⁱⁱ

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to compare what Local Authorities are planning to spend this financial year (2019/20) to spending levels in 2010/11.

Methodology

For the purposes of this research, 'youth services' broadly encapsulates two types of service: 'open-access' (or 'universal') services including a range of leisure, cultural, sporting and enrichment activities often based around youth centres; and more targeted provision for vulnerable young people, including teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, and drug and alcohol misuse services.

To carry out this research, a full set of 2010/11 Local Authority spending data was obtained from the Department for Educationⁱⁱⁱ

In addition, a Freedom of Information (FOI) request was submitted to all local authorities in England requesting:

The planned expenditure on services for young people, as agreed by your local authority, for 2019/20. The details of the request are set out below:

Data set	Planned expenditure on 'Services for Young People'
Data definition:	For the purposes of this request, the data provided should correspond with the definition of 'Service for Young People' used for the Local Authority Section 251 return - lines '3.5.1 Universal services for young people' and '3.5.2 Targeted services for young people.'
Time series:	1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020
Unit:	Agreed expenditure in £(,000)
Geography:	Local authority

This was carried out between May and August 2019. During this time, 84 responses were received.

The mean average spend of the 152 local authorities in England on youth services in 2010/11 was £7.79m.

Of the 84 local authorities in England who responded to the FOI request the mean average planned spend per local authority was £2.45m for the year 2019/20.

Based on the two averages for 2010/11 and 2019/20 the percentage of decline was 68.58%.

In localising the data, the percentage difference for each local authority was calculated and the results were sorted to illustrate the biggest percentage of difference between 2010/11 spending and planned spending from 2019/20.

Findings

The average spend per local authority on youth services in 2010 was £7.79m. The analysis of the 84 Local Authorities across England who responded to the FOI request revealed that the planned average spend per Local Authority on youth services in 2019/20 is £2.45m.

Comparing the youth service spending year of 2010/11 and planned spending year of 2019/20 there is a 69% decline in the nine-year period.

Breakdown

- A third, 29%, (24) of Local authorities planned cuts that would mean they would have reduced their spending on 2010/11 figures by 80%
- 83% (70) of Local authorities planned cuts that would mean they would have reduced their spending on 2010/11 figures by 50%
- 8% (7) of Local authorities planned cuts that would mean they would have reduced their spending on 2010/11 figures by 90%

Below are the local authorities who are planning to cut over 80% of their spending on youth services compared to their budget nine years ago.

	Actual spend in 2010/11 (‘000)	Planned spend in 2019/20 (‘000)	Percentage difference
West Berkshire	£2,853	£76	-97.34%
Gateshead	£6,958	£277	-96.02%
Portsmouth	£3,541	£181	-94.89%
Southampton	£4,036	£238	-94.10%
Somerset	£11,402	£688	-93.97%
Norfolk	£10,537	£865	-91.79%
Nottingham	£9,204	£918	-90.03%
Worcestershire	£8,792	£912	-89.63%
Northamptonshire	£10,693	£1,234	-88.46%
Derby	£7,233	£930	-87.14%
Hampshire	£18,689	£2,436	-86.97%
Liverpool	£14,629	£2,048	-86.00%
Bury	£3,804	£564	-85.17%
Solihull	£4,247	£643	-84.86%
Brent	£8,396	£1,281	-84.74%
Durham	£11,218	£1,750	-84.40%
Darlington	£3,170	£498	-84.29%
Bedford	£3,008	£473	-84.28%
Hillingdon	£7,020	£1,190	-83.05%
North Tyneside	£4,082	£748	-81.68%
Barking and Dagenham	£4,646	£872	-81.23%
Sefton	£6,893	£1,297	-81.18%
Warrington	£3,471	£668	-80.75%
Staffordshire	£14,294	£2,835	-80.17%

Below are the local authorities who are planning to cut under 50% of their spending on youth services since their budget nine years ago.

	Actual spend in 2010/11 (‘000)	Planned spend in 2019/20 (‘000)	Percentage difference
Wigan	£8,160	£4,246	-47.97%
Merton	£3,652	£1,958	-46.39%
South Tyneside	£4,215	£2,263	-46.31%
Lincolnshire	£13,796	£7,786	-43.56%
Islington	£9,242	£5,274	-42.93%
Bournemouth	£3,451	£2,018	-41.52%
Central Bedfordshire	£4,197	£2,539	-39.50%
Bath and North East Somerset	£3,048	£1,880	-38.32%
Camden	£8,642	£5,435	-37.11%
Rutland	£770	£514	-33.25%
Surrey	£21,607	£14,605	-32.41%
Poole	£2,567	£2,018	-21.39%
Hertfordshire	£16,927	£14,039	-17.06%
Bracknell Forest	£1,464	£1,339	-8.54%

Data sources

- Freedom of Information (FOI) requests from 84 Local Authorities in England – carried out between May and August 2019
- The Department for Education, LA and school expenditure: 2010/11 financial year, January 2012

A note on no response Local Authorities

The majority of the Local Authorities who failed to provide the requested information cited issues with timings, stating that the figures were not yet available or that they would later be available publically and so they were unwilling to provide them at the given time.

ⁱ YMCA England and Wales, *Cut Loose*, 2018

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Department for Education, *LA and school expenditure: 2010 to 11 financial year*, January 2012

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

SUPPORT & ADVICE

ACCOMMODATION

FAMILY WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

TRAINING & EDUCATION