

## **18 – 25 young people with multiple disadvantage**

### **Background**

Blackpool Fulfilling Lives identified an increase in 2017 of referrals in the 18 – 25 age group. The strategic board set up a task and finish group in 2019 to look into this with partner agencies. All partner agencies agreed that they had seen an increase in the level of need that young people were presenting with. The partners included Police, Housing, BCH, BCFCT, URpotential, Streetlife, The Hub/Horizon, BYPS as well as BFL.

There is an appetite to continue this group due to the importance of the work and also because of a need to move quickly on the work to be undertaken.

Over 30 new referrals were made to Streetlife by BCH, Public Health and Housing Options during the Covid 19 lockdown emphasising that there is a significant number of young people at risk of becoming adults with multiple disadvantage.

### **Aims**

To identify how Blackpool services and the wider community can prevent young people from experiencing multiple disadvantage, have early access to and the ability to sustain their engagement with services and go on to thrive in society.

### **Actions**

- Explore ways to stop this trend (Prevention)
- Identify what works with this age group (Test and Learn)
- Test new ways of working with this group (System Change)
- Recommend how agencies can better support young people with multiple disadvantage once BFL closes (Prevention)

### **Obstacles**

The group has identified that one reason for the increase could be due to austerity and cuts to services. It is harder for young people to access appropriate support early on. The group have identified several actions but it is struggling to move forward in any meaningful way due to lack of resource.

### **Plan**

Streetlife employs a youth worker on a fixed term contract to fulfil this need and achieve the aims:

- Create volunteer navigators:-
  - Research what works well with the navigator model
  - Create a volunteer navigator model and test it in an organisation working with 18-25 year olds with multiple disadvantage
  - Explore the value of positive male role models building on the success/learning of female to female working
  - Evaluate the success of the volunteer navigator model
- Link 18 – 25 year olds with multiple disadvantage into the existing LET and involve them in the accreditation of services

- Support the actions identified in the 18 – 25 sub-group
- Identify good practice which can be embedded in services, in order to support young people with multiple disadvantage once BFL closes.

**Support for this proposal**

The BFL evaluation event 2019 highlighted the need for some of this work and both the Chair of BFL strategic board (Arif Rajpura) and the Vice-chair of the homeless partnership (Vikki Piper) supported the idea of developing this proposal.

This also builds on recommendations from last year's evaluation report which is to test new ideas, take risks and try new things.