

Youth Service
South Essex Divisional Office
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Dear Graham

57 South Street, Rochford

Thank you for your recent letter seeking our views in respect of the Information Station Rochford. I am happy to contribute on behalf of Essex County Youth Service.

As you know there has been some very good work delivered from South Street and as such it is not easy for us to contemplate the formal closure of the provision. It has also however been difficult for us to meet the expectations of some members with an interest in the provision. There has at times been an unrealistic expectation in regards to the numbers of young people we should be engaging with and the type of work that can be delivered.

The Information Station is not and was never established to be a traditional Youth Centre, neither is the physical environment conducive to the opportunities a Youth Centre would usually provide. The layout of rooms downstairs by their very nature restrict the safe and comfortable numbers of young people we can effectively work with at any one time. Having visited and observed practice from the premises I would not expect my staff to effectively work with any more than twelve young people at time.

The provision has operated as a drop in provision for young people and facilitated group work sessions. We have also been able to locate our complimentary education programmes here over recent years. There are as you know concerns over the fabric of the building and I am not surprised that you quote a figure of £56,000 for works. I am also concerned about the buildings compliance with DDA.

As recently discussed within the Management Group Meetings I would wish for us to locate elsewhere within Rochford where we would be able to work with larger numbers of young people and provide a broader programme to better meet their needs. We are however due to reorganise as a service and as of September form part of the new Teams Around the School Child and Community (TASCC), it is therefore difficult for me to progress any new developments at this time. It is however my intention to deliver services to young people from South Street as long as we can leading up to these changes. The newly configured staff team have been deployed to South Street, and will be re-launching provision over the coming week.

I hope that this information is helpful but please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further comment.

Yours sincerely

Mark Hughes