

Coalfield Area Committee

3rd September, 2008

Integrated Youth Strategy 2008 – 2011: Consultation Document

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Coalfield Area Committee of the Draft Sunderland Integrated Youth Strategy 2008 – 2011 and the associated consultation process.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Strategy is based on government youth policy, from the initial green paper Youth Matters 2005 to Youth Matters Next Steps 2006 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. All of these policies require Local Authorities to:
- Establish Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) throughout England by December 2008;
 - Work together across traditional boundaries to enable integrated delivery of front line services;
 - Engage all young people in constructive positive activities for a minimum of 2 hours per week.
- 2.2 Children's Services Review Committee recently carried out an extensive review of 'Multi- Agency Approaches to Youth Disorder'. The findings supported the council's progression towards a fully integrated and targeted youth support service and recommendations contained within the report have been incorporated into the Integrated Youth Strategy 2008 – 2011 Consultation Document.

3 Current position

- 3.1 The Draft Sunderland Integrated Youth Strategy is for the benefit of all young people and consists of developing places to go, things to do and someone to talk to; accessible to all and with additional support for those young people and families with specific needs.
- 3.2 The challenge for the Council and the Children's Trust has been to develop a flexible framework for a more unified and integrated approach to frontline delivery. An Integrated Youth Board was established in March 2007 that has brought together the relevant services and strategies, all of which have contributed to the development of the Draft Strategy.

3.3 This includes working in partnership with young people to help create new ways of doing things differently, especially for those who are most disadvantaged and hard to reach.

3.4 The Strategy includes the Youth Offer and describes how it will be delivered across four inter-linked key strands:

3.4.1 **Positive Activities:**

Things to do and places to go, including youth clubs and projects, youth work programmes, sports and urban games, extended schools programmes, youth music and arts projects. What young people do, or don't do outside of school matters. Taking part in regular positive activities can lead to better outcomes for young people, families and communities. For example:

In Sunderland: youth work is delivered in a variety of different settings, centre based and detached, via 200 weekly programmes across the city. It ranges from somewhere to meet with friends, drop in youth cafes, music and urban arts projects to residential experiences, outdoor education, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and healthy living, including drug and alcohol awareness programmes. In 2007/08, 13,905 young people aged 13 to 19 years were reached. All secondary schools offer an extended programme and Community and Cultural Services deliver a range of initiatives from sport to youth arts. A website has been developed to promote positive activities www.letsgosunderland.com.

The Challenge for the Strategy is to work in partnership with all key services and providers, young people and communities to develop new and improve existing youth facilities both centre based and detached, and work in different vibrant ways to engage those young people who are most at risk and hard to reach.

3.4.2 **Citizenship and Volunteering:**

Opportunities for young people to get involved and have a say, as well as experience volunteering. Young people tell us that they would like the opportunity to 'put something back into the community and somewhere to go to keep us safe and out of trouble'. Promoting positive images of young people is high on the agenda for this strand. For example:

In Sunderland: Youth Parliament, and City Equals who have designed their own website www.cityequals.co.uk, are very strong and active groups of young people who represent the views of young people to Council Services and policy makers. Other routes include: school councils, youth forums, youth committees and youth-led projects. The Youth Development Group (YDG) registered 7,928 hours of volunteering in 2007/08 and events such as the Youth Arts Exhibition, Young Achievers, Local Democracy Week, and Young People's State of the City Debate and Youthinc Conference help to promote the positive profile of young people.

The Challenge for the Strategy is to increase volunteering opportunities for young people and improve community cohesion and intergenerational relationships.

3.4.3 Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG):

Young people have access to quality IAG delivered from a range of access points in partnership with a variety of agencies. The Government has introduced new quality standards for IAG to ensure that young people are aware of all routes open to them and achieve their full potential. For example:

In Sunderland: Connexions deliver an 'Operational Delivery' model made available by the retention of 3 full-time Connexions Centres in different parts of the city and have a range of action points in schools, colleges and a variety of community settings. In 2007/08, the multi-agency Youth Information Service, delivered from Answers in Holmside, accessed 1,463 young people. Information can also be accessed via a Connexions website. www.connexions-tw.co.uk. An audit and self-assessment against the new quality standards has been undertaken and a time-line developed to monitor progress, with a review date in September 2008.

The Challenge for the Strategy is to work jointly with the 14 to 19 Learning Partnership, to target resources and decrease the percentage of young people in Sunderland who are Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET).

3.4.4 Targeted Youth Support (TYS):

For vulnerable young people and their families or those with additional needs. This strand also acknowledges the importance of balancing the hopes of young people and their developing responsibilities.

In Sunderland: TYS will be delivered via 6 multi-agency teams located in each of the regeneration areas. Following 3 multi-agency conferences for 300 practitioners and over 30 agencies, we have established a TYS pilot in the East and South areas consisting of two integrated teams of practitioners with links to the police-led Local Multi-Agency Panels (LMAPS) and other referral panels. The self assessment for establishing TYS, collated nationally to inform Government, resulted in a written response to the Director of Children's Services in Sunderland from Beverley Hughes, Minister for Children and Young People, acknowledging the progress made and asking for the work to continue to meet the deadline of December 2008.

The Challenge for the Strategy is to provide multi-agency support to young people and families when they need it, alongside measures that expect positive changes in behaviour and attitudes in return.

3.5 The report contains a proposal to restructure and realign existing youth services and budgets to develop a new model for Sunderland.

4 Conclusion:

- 4.1 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure young people have access to a full range of positive activities within integrated frontline delivery. The Draft Strategy and associated consultation will support the Council and the Children's Trust in developing a fully integrated youth support service which is available to all young people and targeted support for those who need it.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Coalfield Area Committee support the Integrated Youth Strategy 2008 to 2011 Consultation Document and the associated consultation process.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 *Youth Matters Green Paper (2005)*
Youth Matters Next Steps (2006)
Education and Inspections Act (2006)
Aiming high for Young people: A ten year strategy for positive activities (2007)

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