

REPORT OF THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YOUTH WORK STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT

1. Recommendations

1.1 Area Committee Members are requested to:

- Note the content of the report.
- Provide feedback on achievements to date.
- Establish and nominate members to form a Task and Finish Group, with the aim to take on board needs, gaps, way forward and financial costs identified within this progress report and provide Committee with future options and recommendations for consideration.

2. The needs

2.1 In accordance with the commissioning framework a comprehensive needs analysis, including extensive consultations, events and workshops with Elected Members, young people and professionals was undertaken in order to identify the most appropriate ways of delivering youth work in Sunderland.

2.2 The information collated from the needs analysis served to influence, shape and design the Youth Work Strategy for April 2010 to March 2012 including the following:

- Developed and implemented the new commissioning of youth work with more flexible ward based contracts and targets with one city wide contract for the BME community.
- Introduced the wider vision of a youth work strategy by developing weekend provision including XL Youth Villages and the delivery of the new mobile provision during the week.

2.3 Youth work contracts for the East Area awarded and in place since April 2010 are as follows:

- Doxford – The Box Youth Project
- Hendon – Hendon Young People's Project
- Millfield – Lambton Street Youth Project
- Ryhope – Bluewatch Youth Project
- St Michael's – Bluewatch Youth Project

In addition, Young Asian Voices have been awarded the BME City-wide contract.

2.4 The focus of youth provision in the East will be to address the following key priorities and needs of young people:

- Increasing the engagement of young people in positive activities
- Reduce the level of NEET young people
- Reducing levels of teenager conceptions
- Reducing incidents of youth disorder
- Deepening the impact of targeted youth support
- Reduce alcohol consumption by young people
- Promoting positive images of young people and celebrating their achievements

2.5 The XL Youth Village events at weekends and the mobile bus service during the week are managed through the Operational and Strategic group meetings consisting of Elected Members and other key partners. This includes identification of sites, locations and target groups.

3. The gaps

3.1 The landscape of funding opportunities is changing and the major challenge in front of us will be to maintain youth provision at current levels of front line delivery. It is forecast for example that:

- The Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund already reduced this year will not be available after 2011.
- Positive Activities Grant, commissioned by the Youth Development Group, to engage young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET will cease in March 2011.
- Youth projects (Hendon Young Peoples Project, Sans Streets Youth and Community Centre, Young Asian Voices, East End and Hendon Detached Youth project) supported from the Back on the Map resources will be at risk of reducing/ceasing services after March 2011.
- The Council faces budget reductions following the governments Spending Review announcement in October 2010.

3.2 Although significant progress has been made via the new commissioning contracts for each ward complemented by the XL Youth Village events and mobile buses, gaps identified in some areas of St Michaels, Millfield, Grangetown and Hollycarrside are mainly due either to the lack of suitable venues for youth work or that funding limits the number of sessions available.

4. Way forward

4.1 Establish a Task and Finish Group to compile relevant information relating to contracted and non contracted youth provision within the East for youth over 11 years old. Considering:

- Future implications of reduced funding to deliver services, but the need to provide a quality service to young people post March 2011.
- Ask objective questions as to what level of service is required, evidence the need and real difference Area Committee can make regarding addressing the priority to identify gaps in youth provision.
- What new ways of working have been introduced which may compensate reduced services or lack of suitable venues to deliver youth provision in a neighbourhood, where there is little or no provision, for example, increased deployment of XL youth villages and buses.
- Recognise that youth provision has a cross cutting theme and is aligned to other East Area Committee priorities identified in the work plan for 2010-11, for example, employment and enterprise, and the conflicts or strengthens this may bring.
- In addition, how this work should complement the Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan which will be implement in April 2011.
- Existing youth work via the commissioned providers of a minimum of 3 sessions per ward, could this be further supported to deliver additional sessions were a clear need is identified within a ward.
- Encourage cross area working, for example, youth providers in West area working with providers in the East, where relevant.
- Other key issues Area Committee may raise.

5. Contact Officer:

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