

17 December 2009		ITEM 5
Children Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
YOUTH AND CONNEXIONS – INFORMAL AND FORMAL YOUTH WORK PROVISION REPORT		
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. S. McPherson, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Not Applicable	
Accountable Head of Service: Jay Mercer, Children, Youth and Families		
Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To provide information to the Committee on the informal and formal Youth Work provision provided by Youth and Connexions across Thurrock.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 That Members consider and comment on the information in this report.**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 This report will present the work that has been undertaken by the Youth & Connexions Service in delivering a range of youth work activities, which provide both formal and informal learning opportunities. It will give examples of ongoing work to deliver the Youth Offer across Thurrock, and recognises that we cannot deliver these services in isolation and that a range of voluntary and community sector organisations also contribute to this agenda.

2.2 Youth Work – A Definition

‘The Government’s view [is] that high quality youth work, delivered by third and statutory sectors, is central to delivering our ambition of increasing the number of young people on the path to success and an important function of integrated youth support services.’ Aiming high for young people, HM Treasury/DCSF 2007.

- 2.3 Youth work enables young people to learn about themselves, others and society through activities that combine enjoyment, challenge, learning and

achievement. It is a developmental process that starts in places and at times when young people themselves are ready to engage. The relationship that is developed between the young person and the Youth Worker is central to this process.

- 2.4 Youth work takes place in a range of settings by nationally and locally qualified, skilled workers. It offers young people safe spaces to explore their identity, experience decision-making, increase their confidence, develop interpersonal skills and think through the consequences of their actions. This enables young people to make informed choices.

2.5 The Policy Context

The Government's framework around 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' programme seeks to provide a new approach to the well being of children and young people from 0 to 19. It aims for every child and young person, to access support at a time and place when it is needed and is focussed around five key themes: -

- Be healthy;
- Stay safe;
- Enjoy and achieve;
- Make a positive contribution;
- Achieve economic well-being;

- 2.6 These five 'ECM outcomes' underpin all aspects of government policy relating to children and young people. Policy specifically relating to young people was set out in *Youth Matters* (2005), and *Youth Matters: next steps* (2006), which developed proposals for a 'radical reshaping of universal services for teenagers – with targeted support for those who need it most'.

- 2.7 Since January 2007 there has been a statutory duty on local authorities, working in partnership with the voluntary and private sectors, to promote the well-being of young people aged 13 to 19 (up to 25 for those with learning difficulties) through securing access to educational and recreational leisure-time activities (referred to as 'positive activities'). This duty was set out in Clause Six of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which gives effect to the proposals contained in *Youth Matters*. *Youth Matters* stated that the government would provide statutory guidance for local authorities setting out a new set of national standards for positive activities. This would include:

- Access to two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal team sports and other activities such as outdoor adventure, aerobics and dance.
- Two hours per week of constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes. These might include young people's own hobbies and interests; personal, social and spiritual development activities; study support; activities encouraging creativity, innovation and enterprise; and residential opportunities.
- Opportunities to make a positive contribution through volunteering, including taking a lead on campaigning and fundraising.

- A wide range of other recreational, cultural and sporting and enriching experiences.
- Safe and enjoyable places to spend time, including socialising with friends.

2.8 Thurrock Youth and Connexions – Our Structure

As of 1st Oct 2008, Thurrock Youth and Connexions became an integrated service, which included the professions of Youth Work, Information, Advice and Guidance and Social Care. This has been split into 2 locality areas that mirror the school cluster arrangements in Thurrock. The service offers both Universal and Targeted delivery.

- Universal delivery (IAG and Youth Work) has been split across 2 localities to reflect and support the school clusters within Thurrock – East Locality (Excellence and North East Cluster) and the West Locality (Central and Lakeside Cluster).
- Targeted delivery (Targeted IAG, Targeted Youth Work and Social Care) is across the whole area and delivered primarily from the Targeted Team and the 14-19 Youth and Development Team.

3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Although Youth Work/Informal Education is primarily delivered in an informal way, for the purposes of this report, informal will include all generic delivery (although a large part of the work is accredited formally) and formal will include specific targeted delivery. We also recognise that we cannot deliver this agenda in isolation and we recognise that a number of voluntary and community groups offer a range of youth work activities across the Authority.

Please see Appendix A that identifies location and youth activities currently being offered

- 3.2 As can be seen, with the use of current integrated resources and the additional support through commissioning voluntary and community groups, the range of work delivered is very diverse and wide but cannot be expected to reach all areas/days etc. However, the needs of Thurrock are changing and as a result of this we may need to consider a more targeted framework to allocating/requesting resources across the authority.
- 3.3 Although the main age remit for Youth Work is 13-19 (up to 25 with differing needs) we also have responsibility for the development and delivery of positive activities for 5-19 year olds across the authority (which links in with the focus of the CYF priorities) and have worked on the following during the last six months.

Promotion / Marketing

- 3.4 We have continued to use the Thurrock FIS website (www.askthurrock.gov.uk) to promote a wide range of positive activities in Thurrock and further develop the positive activities section of the site.
- 3.5 We have worked with Thurrock Council colleagues on the new Thurrock CEF website to ensure youth activities, services and opportunities are featured.
- 3.6 We created and delivered on the 4th Nov 2009, a Youth Celebration Event at Civic Hall, where over 150 young people were recognised for their involvement within Youth and Connexions.

Summer Activity Programme 2009

- 3.7 During the school summer holiday period 2009 a wide range of activities was offered to children and young people from Thurrock. A range of public, private and voluntary organisations provided these activities.
- 3.8 In addition to their own promotion, all organisations within the Positive Activities Task Group were given the opportunity to promote their activities on the FIS website.
- 3.9 All those within the Positive Activities Task Group returned a report to the group. Attendance on all activities amounted to 6,089 children and young people (5 – 19 years).
- 3.10 The Positive Activities Coordinator will continue to work with group members to coordinate future holiday programmes.

October Activity Programme 2009

- 3.11 Staying Safe Week took place in the October half term (26th - 30th). The events were organised by Thurrock Youth & Connexions, 14 - 19 & Youth Development Team and Extended Services. The week saw a host of positive activities taking place across five venues in Thurrock.
- 3.12 Sessions included football, use of the mobile climbing wall, street dance, "DJ" workshops and information, advice and guidance from personal advisors.
- 3.13 A total of 315 young people from 5 - 19 years took part in the week that provided positive activities in a safe and secure environment. This programme was supported by both statutory and voluntary organisations.
- 3.14 Other activities that week were the Positive Activities for Young People project which had 20 young people attending the Firebreak programme through the Fire Service and Grangewaters on outdoor activities. Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme also took a group out on their Expedition Section of the

Award. There was also an “Open Mic” event held at the One Stop Shop in Grays where 25 young people attended to develop their musical skills.

- 3.15 The Positive Activities Task Group is currently developing a range of positive activities for the Christmas holidays. They will also be looking at a range of opportunities for Friday and Saturday evenings to support both local and national priorities.

New Provision – Plans 10/11

Below are some of the plans for new activities in 09/10:

- 3.16 The disability football project in Thurrock, in conjunction with Thurrock Sports Development Team and The Essex County Football Association, will provide football-coaching opportunities for disabled young people outside of curriculum time.
- 3.17 We will set up and run sports courses / awards at the Thurrock Pupil Referral Unit. This will give the opportunity for young people in the Unit to gain national accreditations.
- 3.18 Activities will be arranged with Children’s Centres in Tilbury and Chadwell in the October half term.
- 3.19 The October Half Term Project across the Authority (5 activity days run across 5 sites in Thurrock) will be run with Extended Services, Thurrock Youth and Connexions and linking with school clusters to develop holiday programmes and set up new positive activities.
- 3.20 We will develop Y-OFSTED, which is a participative across service programme that creates the opportunity for young people to assess the quality of the work delivered by Thurrock Council.
- 3.21 We are beginning to explore social and virtual ways of working with young people.
- 3.22 We will set up targeted provision in areas with high anti social behaviour /and or lack of provision.

Strategic Development

- 3.23 We will expand the volunteering opportunities for people to engage in Youth Work to increase capacity.
- 3.24 We will continue to develop the Positive Activities Group to coordinate activities taking place, develop new programmes and support group members
- 3.25 We will work to identify new funding sources and pool budgets with other agencies when setting up provision. We will encourage partners on the positive activities group to work together.

3.26 We will develop monitoring and evaluation procedures within the Positive Activities Group and those voluntary organisations whom we support (for example, Deaf Club)

4. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

4.1 14-19 Strategic Partnership

4.2 Positive Activities Task Group

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

5.1 None

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Yannick Stupples-Whyley**
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There are no direct financial implications within the report.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
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There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
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As the Youth Work Provision Report is for information purposes only, there are no direct diversity implications arising from this report.

6.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

- None

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Appendix A

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