

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

YOUTH SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 27TH SEPTEMBER 2005

WIRRAL YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE - APPROVED POLICY OPTION 'ENHANCING THE YOUTH SERVICE', TRAINING LOCAL PEOPLE TO BE YOUTH WORKERS

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Committee of the development, implementation and outcomes of the approved policy option 'Enhancing the Youth Service', training local people to be youth workers.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Cabinet approved a council policy option for 2004/05 to:
Enhance the Youth Service
Training local people to be youth workers – That, in view of the problems in recruiting and keeping youth workers and the current expansion in demand for individuals with youth work skills, the sum of £120,000 be used to set up and manage a formal one-year training scheme, using attachments to existing youth teams, which will initially provide six local people with the qualifications and experience necessary to play a full part in future youth work on Wirral; that this pilot be reviewed on completion of the year's training, that it be recognised that this also contributes to providing local people with skills and qualifications which can help them into employment if they have previously been unemployed, and it be noted that this meets priorities under 2.2.2 of Employment and Training Needs and under 5.2.1 of Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour by increasing the number of youth workers available.
- 2.2 To manage and deliver this policy option a contract and service level agreement was established between Wirral Youth and Community Service and PSL Group, (formerly Pentra Services Ltd.) a Wirral Intermediate Labour Market provider.
- 2.3 The service level agreement required the PSL Group to recruit, employ and oversee the overall welfare of six Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) trainees. Wirral Youth and Community Service was required to provide work placements, facilitate a day to day work programme and provide youth work specific training opportunities. A Senior Worker was appointed to act as the key point of contact between the Youth Service and PSL Group and to provide non-managerial support for the six trainees and the work placement supervisors.

3.0 Implementation

- 3.1 Commencing in September 2004, six local people were employed for 25 hours per week, with five on 45 week contracts. One person had a contract of only 35 weeks, due to a lengthy delay in the enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check being processed.
- 3.2 All six trainees were placed within full-time Youth Service units, to accommodate their hours and supervision. These placements were: Deeside Young People's Project,

Konnectabus Project, Moreton Youth and Community Centre, Response, Shaftesbury Youth Club and Wirral Youth Theatre.

3.3 Training was undertaken by all the trainees. This included: induction (to PSL and placements), European Community Driving Licence (ECDL) modules, 9 week Access Course (for entry to NVQ Level 3 Youth Work), Child Protection, disability awareness, introduction to benefits system, social fund, communicating with children, and frontline reception.

4.0 **Outcomes**

4.1 **Trainees** - Three of the trainees have gained employment as follows:

- Part-time managerial position within Wirral Youth and Community Service as an Acting Principal Youth Worker.
- Intake Caseworker for National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) in Birkenhead
- New Pathways Children's Services, children's home in Rock Ferry.

One of the trainees has been accepted at Liverpool John Moores University to study Social Work (full time) commencing in September 2005.

Two of the trainees are on the Youth Service pool list and undertaking paid work on an as and when basis.

One of the trainees is yet to secure a job, but is looking for employment in fields related to youth work.

4.2 **Youth Service** – Outcomes for the Service have included:

- Additional staff support in excess of the service establishment that has proved valuable in creating additional opportunities for young people within the units that had a trainee attached.
- The position of Senior Youth Worker created to support the implementation of this policy option has been of benefit to Wirral Youth and Community Service as a whole. The job description for this post also included field work support for the wider service, which has enabled new initiatives in the areas of quality assurance, training and data collection to take place. These initiatives have had a positive impact on the service, contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.
- When the trainee posts were advertised, there was a huge response, over 60 applications, proving the demand for substantial part-time posts with a training element attached.
- The service has been unable to retain the services of the majority of the trainees. Therefore, in future, consideration should be given to offering trainee posts over a longer period of time with the opportunity to gain a full-time qualification in youth work.

5.0 **Financial and Staffing Implications**

5.1 A total of £120,000 financed this policy option; at a cost of £90,000, PSL Group paid salaries, managed and administered the employment of the trainees, provided ECDL training, jobsearch, motivation training and other employability skills as well as guidance and support regarding personal development opportunities for the trainees.

5.2 Wirral Youth and Community Service retained £30,000 to fund the employment and management of the Senior Worker.

6.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

6.1 Creation of the six trainee posts enabled local people to gain skills to pro-actively enter the employment market.

7.0 Human Rights Implications

There are none arising from this report.

8.0 Community Safety Implications

There are none arising from this report.

9.0 Planning Implications

There are none arising from this report.

10.0 Local Member Support Implications

There are none arising from this report.

11.0 Background Papers

Cabinet 16th February 2004, minute 5.2.2.

12.0 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note report and request the Director to provide a further report on training opportunities for youth workers.

Howard Cooper
Director of Education & Cultural Services