

WIRRAL YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE – AGE RANGE

Executive Summary

- 1.0 This report presents issues relating to the Youth Service age group. The Committee is asked to approve recommendation 12.0.

Background

- 2.0 Since the 1980's Wirral Youth Service's age range has been:

Young people aged 13 -25 years, with a priority age range of 13-19 years.

- 2.1 In recent years, as a direct result of the Transforming Youth Work agenda, national youth service targets and key performance indicators are now wholly concerned with young people aged 13-19 years. Funding from central government for youth services is now allocated per head for the 13-19 youth population.

- 2.2 *Transforming Youth Work – Resourcing Excellent Youth Services 2002* states:

The youth service needs to be accessible to all young people in the target age range, and to those targeted groups in the 11-13 and 19-25 age ranges

- 2.3 The new *Education and Inspections Bill* contains the legislation implementing the Youth Matters Green Paper. Clause 6 states:

A new duty on local authorities to improve the well-being of young people aged 13 - 19 (and up to 25 for those with learning difficulties) by providing access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities.

The Current Position

- 3.0 The vast majority of the Youth Service's current work is with young people aged 13-19 years. In generic youth units the majority of young people who attend are within this age range. However, in units for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities young people tend to attend into their 20s. A proportion of Response's clients are over 19, most of these clients present as vulnerable and have complex needs.

- 3.1 The Children and Young People's Department works with young people up to the age of 19 and beyond if they have a disability or have been in care.

- 3.2 The draft information sharing protocols for the Wirral state:

You can share information in respect of unborn children and persons from birth to their 18th birthday.

You may share information in respect of persons aged 18 and 19, care leavers over the age of 19 who are receiving services under sections 23C to 24D of the Children Act 1989 and young people under 25 who have a learning difficulty and are receiving services under section 13 of the Learning and Skills Act.

Re-definition

- 4.0 In order to align with the national youth work agenda, best serve the interests of Wirral young people, and maximise existing resources, Wirral Youth Service's priority age range should remain 13-19 years. However, some young people have complex multiple needs which hinder their development making it difficult to exit the service at age 20, this includes young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. In these cases it may take longer to signpost, therefore, flexibility and targeted support would need to be considered.
- 4.1 Given the above it is proposed that Wirral Youth Service age range be redefined as:
- *Young people aged 13-19 years, and specifically targeted young people aged 20 until their 25th birthday who have additional needs and need support with transition into adult life/services*

Financial and Staffing Implications

- 5.0 There are none arising directly from this report.

Equal Opportunity Implications

- 6.0 This paper seeks to ensure equality of opportunity for young people with complex multiple needs.

Human Rights Implications

- 7.0 There are none arising directly from this report.

Community Safety Implications

- 8.0 There are none arising directly from this report.

Planning Implications

- 9.0 There are none arising directly from this report.

Local Member Support Implications

- 10.0 This report covers all wards.

Background Papers

- 11.0 *Transforming Youth Work – Resourcing Excellent Youth Services 2002*
Education and Inspections Bill
Wirral draft Information sharing protocols

Recommendation

- 12.0 The Committee is asked to approve the redefinition of the Youth Service age range, outlined in 4.1 above.

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