

## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

### **YOUTH SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**      **9 July 2007**

#### **HEAD OF YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE REPORT**

##### **Executive Summary**

- 1.0 This report seeks to inform the Committee on the developments within the Youth & Play since the last Youth Service Advisory Committee. The Committee is asked to note the report.

##### **Staff Movements**

- 2.0. Karen Smith has resigned from her post as Principal Youth Worker with the Konnectabus project. Karen resigned to take up a position elsewhere in the authority.
- 2.1. Joanne Bretherton has taken up the post of acting Principal Youth Worker at the Noctorum Young People's Project.
- 2.2. Adam Mellor has been appointed as Principal Youth Worker at Pensby Youth Club.
- 2.3. Margaret Ballard has resigned from her posts in the Allandale and Wallasey Young People's Project. Margaret has been with the service for twenty three years.

##### **Youth Service Outreach Team.**

- 3.0. The Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team continues to work with young people on the streets and in other locations where they congregate. Through the relationships that the youth workers have developed with them, young people have the opportunity to access a range of activities that address their needs and interests.
- 3.1 The Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team has planned local summer activities, such as those in Birkenhead Park, as well as Wirral wide events. The annual Sand Sculpture Competition, held at New Brighton, was a huge success and attracted over 100 participants. Another school holiday football event will be held at the Soccer Dome in August.
- 3.2. Interagency work is well established in the Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team. To develop even more effective working relationships between youth workers and other agencies, as a pilot project, joint training sessions will be held with the police, starting in July.

- 3.3. The Youth Service Outreach Team has been actively developing young people's participation. Over 50 young people attended an Open Forum Meeting in Rock Ferry with elected members and the police. The Neighbourhood Youth Workers have facilitated the Youth Forum meetings.
- 3.4. North End Young People's Project, Birkenhead Youth Action Project and South Wirral Young People's Project are Health Promoting Youth Units and in all units, health issues are an important aspect of the work with young people.
- 3.5. Birkenhead Youth Action Project has been successful in engaging with Muslim young men, who live in the Woodlands area, in the Harmony Project. The young men play football at Grange Road West Sports Centre on a Friday night and the youth workers are supporting them in a funding bid to the Youth Opportunities Fund.
- 3.6. In partnership with Regender Housing Association and Tranmere Together, BYAP has set up a Young People's Resource Shop in Rock Ferry. In this area of relatively high unemployment, young people now have access to facilities, which will enable them to develop their skills and confidence so that they can play a constructive role in their neighbourhood.
- 3.7. As the group will be leaving school shortly, Deeside Young People's Project has been considering careers and further education with the Newton Park group. Young people from West Kirby have successfully completed a 26-week Fire and Marine Rescue course, which is accredited as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. In Pensby, work has been done with a group who have accessed Extended School provision.
- 3.8. To expand the opportunities available to young people on the Beechwood and Ballantyne Estates, Fender Youth Action Project has worked with the young people to develop a dance project to run alongside the weekly football session.
- 3.9. In an area of few facilities for young people, Noctorum Young Peoples Project has secured the use of the community centre for a weekly boxercise session. NYPP has successfully engaged with young people in Oxtan who now participate in a Friday night football session at Wirral Tennis Centre. An alcohol awareness session was held in the outdoors.
- 3.9. Young people from the North End Young People's Project did the coastal walk. Drug and alcohol awareness workshops have been attended. The young people made a successful bid for Youth Forum funding to run a healthy eating project. NEYPP is undertaking work in Birkenhead Park and support is being given to the work of the newly appointed Community Projects Officer for the park.

- 3.10. The South Wirral Young People's Project is working with young men in New Ferry in the Village Hall. The young men have created a board game aimed at raising awareness about drug and alcohol abuse. In partnership with the police, a successful Friday evening football session at the Oval, attended by young men from a wide area, is helping to break down barriers.
- 3.11. The Corridor Project is focusing on building relationships with the young people who congregate in the vicinity of Borough Road and staff liaise with other outreach teams.
- 3.12. Nationally, libraries are aiming to attract and involve more young people through the Fulfilling Their Potential initiative. Wallasey Young People's Project and the Oldershaw School BEST team, together with the staff of Seacombe Library, have worked with young people from Oldershaw School on a peer research project, the findings of which are to be displayed at a North West celebration event in Preston. Four of the group have gained a bronze Youth Achievement Award. WYPP, in partnership with the police, has worked with young people to develop a peer education programme.

### **Birkenhead and Bebington Area Team**

- 4.0. The Youth Clubs in the Area continue to be busy and well attended. There are increasing focus upon providing opportunities for young people to achieve both recorded and accredited outcomes from their participation and involvement in the busy programmes. A feature of the recent work has been the group sessions that have prepared bids for the Youth Opportunities fund. This has proved to be an interesting stimulus to debate and development. Maintaining staffing levels and recruitment is an ongoing programme. The Youth Service offers superb experience and opportunities for people wishing to work within this sphere but this means that there are continuing recruitment issues as our staff move to more substantive posts or into higher education.
- 4.1. **Shaftesbury Youth Club** continues its century long tradition of offering topical opportunities to young people of Birkenhead and the Wirral. Recent projects have included a massive re-cycling project that culminated in a fashion show for members of the public friends and family. The evening event on 5<sup>th</sup> June was a huge success and was attended by many organisations dedicated to environment protect. Shaftesbury run a number of recycling schemes that highlight to young people the importance of environmental and global matters. Health and exercise projects continue as a core to the work and the Club allotment will some be available for use in this.
- 4.2. **Viking Youth Club** is hosting the first weekly Brook drop in clinic in the area and this is proving a useful facility for the local community. Their

regular weekly programme of activities was recently rewarded when the dance group won a Youth Federation competition. The management Committee continue to raise funds to ensure the Club can open on additional nights particularly at the weekend. During the summer months there are a number of activities planned, as the Centre is the base for a PAYP holiday project.

- 4.3. **Cavendish Youth Club** was reported as undertaking a massive scheme of refurbishment and this has been ongoing through out the period of this report. The worker in Charge has reported that in addition to the financial support the Club has received it has had numerous offers of practical support from the local community and old Club members. Throughout the work the Club has run its usual activities. It is hoped that the last works will be completed by September when there is a grand re-opening planned.

### **Wallasey Deeside Area Team**

- 5.0. During the May Half Term, the youth club was asked to facilitate a sports 'drop in' in the Woodchurch Sports complex. This took place over three days. The centre was opened for any young person to come in to use the gym, sports hall or dance studio for free. During July the artist who is designing some artwork for the Hoole Road Shutter Project the shops on Hoole Road, has continued to have contact with the Young people who attend the club to consult with them on how the artwork can represent them as young people.
  - 5.1. The young people taking part in the Video Project have been involved in a training programme learning how to use a camera, how to put together the shape of the story. 'Community TV' delivered this training and have agreed to come back to run a five week training course.
  - 5.2. There was a meeting with police and young people to discuss issues and questions relating to the section 30 that has been applied to the estate. The police officer and Community Service Officer (CSO) spoke with the young people informally about what a section 30 is and why there is one and what the implications are for the young people on the estate. They also made the most of the opportunity to try to build some relationships with the young people by having a game of pool with them. One of the young people is also looking into doing her work experience with the CSO's.
  - 5.3. Health Promoting Youth Units Moreton Youth Club, has gained their Silver Award, as part of the Health Promoting Youth Settings Programme. His level promotes work relating to Emotional Health and Well Being. Three groups of young people attended the play "Bully" which was performed at Birkenhead Town Hall The Drama Group fund raised for the costs to work with a professional actress from "Brookside" They completed a 4-session project on BULLYING and produced a CD of their performance.

- 5.4. The project room is being transformed into Chill Out Space with members participating in the re-vamp of the room by decorating, painting and furnishing the room. The club outreach team have been working with "Park Orr" group who have been attending a 4 week British Red Cross First Aid training course in which they all passed and received certificates which will last them for 3 years.
- 5.5. The Allandale Youth Club has been getting large numbers of young people 60+. Young people have been involved in a number of activities that have included organising their own Disco. Young people were responsible for all aspects of the planning i.e. code of conduct, and the type of music to be played.
- 5.6. The Youth House in Leasowe has been through a period of repair and it is ready to be in operation at the end of July. There will be an official opening of the Youth House which will include the community, local agencies and young people. This will increase the opportunities for future partnership/development work to start i.e. links with extended school supporting excluded young people through their involvement in specific activities. Two ice skating trips were organised following a successful application to the Area Youth Forum. The trips took place on Friday evenings with a large number of young men taking part. Wirral Youth theatre has made contact with one of the young female members with aim of her taking part in the next peer educators and dance coach course. This is a great outcome as the young female will be moving to less familiar surroundings to take part.
- 5.7. Adam Mellor is now Principal Youth Worker. Meetings have taken place to plan for the year ahead. The Club has been busy with up to 30 Young people attending on both nights.
- 5.8. Greasby Youth Club as part of the Health Promoting Youth Settings Programme is introducing fruit as part of the Tuck shop and this has been very successful. The Community Safety Officer's (CSO) visit the club on a regular basis playing football with the young people, one of the CSO's is a qualified to coach the A1 award to young people. The Pavilion should be open in early July this will then be used as a base for group work.
- 5.9. At St Mary's Youth Club, the Bronze Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award groups have been preparing for expedition season concentrating on, issue of kit, map work, community service and skill, putting up tents for first time there have already been two expeditions to The Yorkshire Dales.
- 5.10. Youth workers at West Kirby Youth Club have been organising cook nights, preparing food from different countries and looking at what are the differences and similarities between them. Club outreach workers

have been successful in contacting new young people who have started to attend the youth club.

### **Duke of Edinburgh Award**

- 6.0. Over the past few months, delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Wirral has widened in its approach. Staff are continuing to work, in liaison with the Cultural Inclusion Officer, to promote the Award with looked after children. A group of 15 young people meet on a regular basis and engage in Award related activities. They recently organised a very successful "staff car wash day" at the Hamilton Building complex to raise money for a forthcoming expedition in North Wales.
- 6.1. We continue to support young people who, for whatever reason, are unable to access the Award in their school, youth club or uniformed organisation. One such group has just completed its Silver qualifying expedition and are now expressing an interest in starting their Gold Award.
- 6.2. Twelve young people have just successfully completed a 24 week course with Merseyside Fire and Rescue. Participation in this course satisfies the requirements of the Award's service section. Consequently, at a recent event, the High Sheriff of Merseyside presented the young people with their Award certificates.
- 6.3. The number of Award Access Organisation continues to increase. Following negotiations with the Birkenhead Park Community Projects Officer, Birkenhead Park Heritage Education and Community Involvement Project has now been authorised as a provider of Award Service opportunities.
- 6.4. In a break from tradition, the next Gold Award Presentation Ceremony will be held at Windsor Castle. Twelve young people from Wirral have been invited to this prestigious event and will receive their Awards from The Earl and Countess of Wessex.

### **International Work**

- 7.0. We have three main projects this year which are a reciprocal Youth Exchange with Hong Kong/China, a multi national visit to the Azores and a worker study visit with Bremen, Germany. Ivy Farm continues to be busy having just had the shower block and toilets completely renewed through the efforts of last years Hong Kong group with the help of a Y.O.F. grant.
- 7.1. The Special Needs Summer Programme will run throughout August with the emphasis on Callister/Belvidere Youth Clubs and Foxfield school.
- 7.2. Recruitment for the next Senior Member Training course will take place

after the Summer break.

### **Response**

- 8.0. Response has teamed up with trading standards and the PCT to deliver training to off licences across Wirral. The training is being offered to licence holders in an attempt to raise awareness relating to the Law, Young People, anti social behaviour and the impact on health. This 'joined up' work is a new way of addressing the issue of underage drinking and we hope that the impact will prove beneficial. The Response service will offer follow up support to off licences.
- 8.1. The Bitesize initiative with Brook continues to add value to the schools PSHE curriculum and a new drugs education zone has been introduced into the programme. A joint application is being prepared for submission for the 'The Children and Young People's Services Awards' later this year. Response and Brook are very confident in their joint project that is being delivered across the borough and hoping for a successful outcome.
- 8.2. During this period there have been 101 new referrals into the counselling service the majority being aged 13-19. The counselling service as always is a very well used service. During the period from 15<sup>th</sup> March to the end of May 2007, a total of 75 new young people were referred into counselling. Fifty individual young people took up appointments offered to them and attended a total of 298 sessions
- 8.3. A drop in afternoon counselling service has been introduced for those young people who do not have an appointment but would like to speak to a counsellor about some of the issues they are struggling with. This has been a popular service for those young people who feel that they cannot wait for an appointment. The Biophysical solution sessions continue to be popular with young people struggling with addictions, or are feeling angry or anxious. The mediation service continues to be available on a Tuesday evening 26 families have been support through this service during this period
- 8.4. The launch of Kooth.com, an on line counselling service for young people aged 13-25 is an exciting development for young people and the team are working closely with this service and are able to compliment each others service by providing a seamless waiting period for young people.
- 8.5. Response Outreach Team have worked with a group of young people from our street work project on Borough Road, and the Community Safety Team weekly on the police unit in preparation for a 5-day residential at Oakland's'. The group were successful in their bid for the Youth Opportunity Awards and won an award for the most impressive project.

The team have been invited back to deliver a 5 week personal development programme, using the 'Are we there yet' game with single sex groups. This has been going really well and drug, alcohol and personal safety sessions have been delivered.

8.6. Recently, the team have developed a new project called the 'Imagine' project. Individual young people are referred to the project from within our Tier 2 & 3 Response Service, meeting on a weekly basis to engage in group work and activities. The aim of the project is reduce young people's substance misuse and work in preparation towards a 6-day expedition on the Caledonian Canal. The group have been working well together and are putting a bid together for the 'Youth Opportunity Funds'. The project has already showed success in young people reporting a cessation in substance misuse.

8.7. One Hundred and Twenty individual young people have accessed the Housing Advice Service at Response between mid Feb and end of May in this period.

Of these :-

38 attended for a one off advice session or did not return for any further sessions.

35 have been accommodated

15 cases are ongoing

12(approx) have returned home

5 have referred directly to another service

15 are living between family and friends on a temporary basis.

8.9 A group of Response Service Users who had previously been homeless were successful in a bid to the Youth Opportunities / Youth Capital Funds to assist young homeless people in dire situations. They were able to supply us with, food, toiletries, clothes vouchers and other essential assistance for homeless young people when all else failed.

8.10 We were successful with a Supporting People bid to help our exiting strategy of housing support work with 20-25 year old adults facing homelessness. This bid has created a full time post until next March to support young people to access services and help develop existing services for this client group.

8.11 Relationships between Response and other agencies are running smoothly. In particular Wirral Partnership Homes, Homeless Advisors, Forum Housing Association and Merseyside Accommodation Project have all been supportive towards accommodating some of our more vulnerable young people. Young people who have been evicted from, or are unsuited to the mainstream hostel projects, due to complex multiple issues, vulnerability or challenging behaviour still face a lack of accommodation in the Borough.



## **Staff Training**

- 9.0. Training continues across all grades with a wide range of issues and awards being offered. The majority of staff have now attended Child Concern model and related training. Some thirty staff have recently attended Child Protection Training, some of whom have gained the NSPCC Certificate which required additional assessment. Staff are also taking advantage of opportunities offered by the Department and external agencies in Management, Drugs, Interviewing/Appointing, Self Harm and specialised counselling. Staff are also in demand for workshops in the North West and wider afield as a result of gaining Beacon Status.
- 9.1. The conclusion of Transforming Youth Work funds has reduced the capacity on in-house training opportunities. Further options are being followed up to seek additional funding for the NVQ programme, especially as the partnership with Social Services Social Care Assessment is scheduled to end at the end of the year. Youth Service are the only supplier of the awards in Youth Work and the market is bigger than just our own employees, and so opportunities with Wirral Metropolitan college Centre of Vocational Excellence and the Learning and Skills Council Train to Gain Brokers. As regards the current programme, after a slow start, more staff are successfully completing NVQs units which in turn enables assessors to gain their Assessor Awards.
- 9.2. Occupational Standards for Youth Work are in the process of being reviewed and updated by Lifelong Learning UK, the Sector Skills Council for Youth Work. Staff have had the opportunity to contribute to this development and a future objective will be to ensure service-wide familiarisation with the Standards as they will underpin all future qualifications from late 2008, from NVQ Level 2 to Honours Degrees.
- 9.3. The Youth & Play Service continues to have a strong relationship with Liverpool John Moores University. Two Wirral employees have recently gained professional status from there. Undergraduates are also on placement in Wirral and Youth Service Staff have access to CPD opportunities at the University. The expansion of higher Education qualifications and courses is putting pressure on the service to find placements from all over the North West. Youth & Play Service staff are encouraged to take advantage of the Council's Virtual Learning Resource Centre in partnership Ashridge.
- 9.4. The current data collection system, DARTS, is free standing and so fails to comply with the requirement of linking to other systems. The feasibility of buying a Capita Youth Service Module to attach to the Department's EMS system is being examined with a view to trials later in the year. Staff training in this area will be required as well improved IT networks.

**Financial & staffing Implications**

10.0

**Equal Opportunities Implication**

11.0.

**Human Rights Implication**

12.0.

**Community Safety Implication**

13.0.

**Planning Implication**

14.0.

**Local Member Support Implication**

15.0.

**Background Papers**

16.0

**Recommendation**

17.0. That the Committee notes the report.

**Howard Cooper**

**Director of Children's Services**