

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

#### YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 7 May 2008

#### REPORT OF HOWARD COOPER DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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#### Wirral Executive Youth Board

##### 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This report informs the Committee about the progress in relation to the establishment of Wirral's Executive Youth Board. The Committee is asked to note the report.

##### 2.0 **Background**

2.1 In 2005 Wirral Council adopted the Charter of Participation as policy for the Council in relation to the development of participation by children and young people. Since then there has been an increase in the range of participation opportunities for children and young people. In 2006 Wirral Council and partners were awarded Beacon Status for Participation by children and young people in the Democratic and Community Process. In 2007 Wirral Council with the other eight Beacon authorities was successful in securing funding from the Cabinet Office to further develop participation by young people but at a strategic level. In Wirral's case this means the establishment of the Executive Youth Board.

2.2 Currently there exists a number of ways in which children and young people are able to become involved in the decision making processes. These include:

- Pupil Panels
- School Councils
- Connect-uz
- Youth Forums
- Young Advisors
- Peer Educators
- Youth Opportunity Fund/ Youth Capital Fund Grant Panel
- YAPSAC

2.3 There is now a need to establish the Executive Youth Board which will act as the overarching group for the consultation of and involvement by young people in strategic decision making. This group will act as the main contact point between young people and elected members. As

part of being a member of the EYB the young people will be expected to attend youth forums and ensure that young people in their locality are informed of issues and developments as they affect them. As the Children and Young people's Partnership Board develops, it is envisaged that the EYB will act as a reference point for young people.

- 2.4 The EYB was promoted at the Youth Voice Conference and Youth parliament. In addition the opportunity to take part was advertised at the UKYP election results event. Young people were consulted on the ways in which the recruitment should be organised. A clear message was that it should not be a popularity contest. With this in mind it has been decided that recruitment should be via an interview process with young people acting as the interviewing panel.
- 2.5 During any organised participation activity, young people have been asked to register if they wish to be involved in other opportunities. One hundred and thirty young people have registered an interest in taking part in the EYB on 22 April all schools were sent information about the EYB, the information included a briefing document (Annex A) and an offer from the Youth and Play Service to provide briefing sessions in schools if this was felt necessary. The same information has been sent to colleagues in the Voluntary and Community Sector, Youth Workers and members of the Positive Contribution Strategy Group. The young people who registered an interest have been sent a letter advising them of this opportunity and what they have to do if they wish to apply. Copies of briefings and letters (Annex B & C) are attached.
- 2.6 At the same time there is a need to recruit the new grant panel to oversee the allocation of the YOF/YCF monies. Therefore it has been decided to run this recruitment at the same time. The briefings make clear that the processes are running in parallel. To ensure that as many young people as possible can take part, young people will only be able to be a member of either the grant panel or the EYB. There is also the opportunity for young people to join the Youth parliament planning group.
- 2.7 All applications have to be received by 19 May and interviews will take place on 7 June. As the young people will be involved in making decisions they will be expected to attend training on 14 June and 5 July, both are Saturdays. This training will also involve Elected Members as part of their agreed training on engaging with young people.
- 2.8 A key task for the EYB will be identifying how best to recruit the future EYB and when this should take place. Other points to be considered will be length of term of office and how to ensure the work of the EYB links in with other participation mechanisms for young people.

3.0 **Financial and Staffing Implications**

3.1 There are none arising from this report

4.0 **Equal Opportunities Implications**

4.1 In recognition of the barriers to engagement by vulnerable groups of young people, there will be a number of places available on the EYB, Youth Grant panel and the Youth Parliament Planning Group for young people who are looked after, who have Learning Difficulties and Disabilities and who are from the BME community. This is in line with the recommendation in the 2005 JAR report.

5.0 **Human Rights Implications**

5.1 There are none arising from this report

6.0 **Community Safety Implications**

6.1 There are none arising from this report

7.0 **Planning Implications**

7.1 There are none arising from this report

8.0 **Local member Support implications**

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

9.0 **Recommendations**

9.1 The Committee is asked to note the report.

Howard Cooper  
Director Children's Services