



Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee

Date:	Thursday, 7 May 2009
Time:	5.30 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 3 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 6)**
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2009
3. **MATTERS ARISING**
4. **HEAD OF SERVICE REPORT (Pages 7 - 16)**
5. **VIRTUAL BABIES REPORT AND PRESENTATION (Pages 17 - 20)**
6. **YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**
7. **EXECUTIVE YOUTH BOARD UPDATE**
8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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**Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee
Thursday 12th February
Room 3, Town Hall**

Present

Chair Cllr T Harney.
Councillors T Anderson, S L Clarke, K Hayes, C Meaden.
Council Officers Peter Edmondson (Head of Branch, Participation & Inclusion), Maureen McDaid (Head of Youth & Play Service), Terry Hall (Deputy Head, Field Support), Lindsay Davidson (Deputy Head, Policy Development), Steve Chan (Deputy Head, Play), John Davies (acting Deputy Head), Pat Rice (Head of Response), Bev Madeley (Response), Donna Callaghan (Response).

Apologies

Cllr W Smith, PA Smith, S Quinn.

No members of the EYB were present.

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- Minute 48 - Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament 2008
- Minute 49 - Wirral Summer Holiday Playschemes Report 2008
- Minute 50 - Response
- Minute 51 - Date of Next Meeting

Minute 43 - Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the apologies. It was noted that no members of the EYB were present, but they had all attended several other evening meetings in the recent past.

Minute 44 - Minutes of the last Meeting held on 29th October 2008

The minutes were checked for accuracy, and no corrections were needed:

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 29th October 2008, be accepted as a true record.

Minute 45 - Matters Arising

Maureen McDaid supplied the figures that had been requested in connection with the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award following her report at the last meeting. The reach in Wirral was 1.8%, representing 583 young people. The North West average was 280 young people.

Resolved:

Members of the Committee contact the Head of Youth Service if they require more information about the take up of DofE.

Minute 46 - Head of Service's Report

Maureen McDaid began by offering the condolences of the Committee to the family of Graham Ashdown who had recently died after 40 years service to young people.

She informed the Committee that she would be moving imminently into a new role in the Department which would be commissioning services for young people. Lindsay Davidson would take over the role of Head of Service temporarily until permanent arrangements were in place.

Maureen McDaid drew the Committee's to several highlights of the report:

- a) the Youth Theatre who recent "Swings & Roundabouts" production had been extremely successful resulting in being asked to perform at National Conference to be held in Halton;
- b) a group of looked after children who had successfully completed a Gold DofE Award Residential in the Czech Republic;
- c) recent activities of the Executive Youth Board (EYB);
- d) refinements to the process to select candidates for the next UK Youth Parliament Elections.

Resolved:

- i) The Committee offer their deepest sympathy to the widow and family of Graham Ashdown;
- ii) The Committee note the Head of Service's Report and wish her every success in new post;
- iii) The Chair of the Committee write to the EYB to thank them for chairing the last Meeting.

Minute 47 - Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund 2006-2009

Lindsay Davidson reported on the activity of the Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund (YOF/YCF) which was approaching the end of its third year. The total sum available has increased from the initial £390,000 to over £600,000 for next year, 2009-2010. There have been over 17,000 beneficiaries.

Now that it was possible to see where the money was going, the Grant Panel are looking to use the money to commission services to give young people greater and easier access to leisure facilities and to support areas such as teenage pregnancy and drug and health issues – issues which were also debated in the Youth Parliament.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Minute 48 - Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament, 16th Oct 2008

Maureen McDaid reported on the Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament. The hot-seating at the Youth Voice Conference had been a big improvement on the previous year, by using rooms in the Town Hall other than just the big Civic Hall. However, everyone involved felt that it could be improved further by having fewer but longer sessions.

The Youth Parliament debate in the Council Chamber had been very lively with much cogent argument. However it raised many issues about procedure and order and how the Council should respond to the resolutions made by the Youth Parliament.

Cllr Harney proposed that the Party Spokepersons, the EYB and the Mayor Elect all meet before the next YAPSAC meeting to examine these issues and propose how the Youth Parliament can operate alongside the Council.

Further discussion took place around how the EYB can be more closely integrated into YAPSAC, by chairing meetings, adding items to the Agenda and forwarding resolutions on to Scrutiny Committees. It was recognised that these proposals would impact on the constitution, potentially requiring amendments to be made.

Maureen McDaid went on to report that the two year Beacon Peer Support Project in which Wirral Council was paired with Knowsley and Liverpool, was coming to an end. The researcher attached to the project had commented on the level of involvement between young people and Elected Members, and that shadowing of Senior officers was in place.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted;
- ii) That Party Spokepersons, the EYB and the Mayor Elect meet before the next YAPSAC meeting to examine these issues and propose how the Youth Parliament can operate alongside the Council.

Minute 49 - Wirral Summer Holiday Playschemes Report 2008

Steve Chan reported on the 20 Summer Playschemes. Of the 81 staff appointed, almost half had worked the previous year, easing training and other pre-requisites. The Outreach Team had widened the service across the Borough and reached 1,000 children. Lottery funding would enable this service to be extended to all year round.

Cllr. Anderson queried the provision at Woodchurch, which had only operated in the summer although it was an all year round provision. Steve Chan stated that there had been long term sick leave and with no budget allocation for cover, the centre was not able to meet the OFSTED requirements. Lottery funding is being directed to fill this gap.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted;
- ii) That Members be kept informed of developments relating to staffing issues, particularly at Woodchurch.

Minute 50 - Response

Pat Rice reported on the activity of Response, particularly in relation to housing support and alcohol misuse. In partnership with Merseyside Police and Arrowe Park Accident & Emergency, Response are now receiving and following up referrals relating to excessive consumption of alcohol.

Take up by young people of Kooth online counselling service was increasing and a counsellor was now based in Response.

A joint project, Bitesize, in partnership with Brook Advisory Service has been nominated for an award.

Members expressed their continued concern about housing issues for young people.

Resolved:

- i) That the report be noted and the staff at Response be thanked;

- ii) That a representative from Forum Housing be invited to the next meeting;
- iii) That housing issues for young people be updated by raising the matter with the Regeneration Department.

Minute 51 - Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for 5:30 pm on Thursday 7th May 2009 in Committee Room 1, Town Hall.

As resolved at a previous meeting, this next meeting will be chaired by young people and recorded using the video technology in the Committee Room.

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REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

HEAD OF YOUTH AND PLAY SERVICE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to brief the Committee on the work of the service since the last meeting in February 2009.

1. Staff Movements

- 1.1. Johanne Bretherton, who was Acting Principal Youth Worker with Noctorum Young People's Project returned to her Level 1 post at the end of March and it is hoped to make another temporary appointment in the near future.
- 1.2. Youth Crime Action Plan funding has been secured to enhance the Birkenhead and Seacombe posts until 31 March 2010. Ria Modena and Adam Mellor will continue in these posts. Their work will have a strong focus on anti social behaviour hot spots and providing activities on Friday and Saturday evenings.
- 1.3. Jeni Cockayne is retiring from her post as Counselling Co-ordinator within the Response agency. Jeni has been with the Youth Service for 28 years, since 1981. Her colleagues wish her well and hope she will enjoy her retirement in France.

Area Team reports**2.0. South Wirral and Birkenhead Districts**

- 2.1. Activity within the Area team has benefited from an almost full staffing compliment. Time is being spent inducting the new staff as they are included into their respective staff teams.
- 2.2. Charing Cross Neighbourhood Youth Centre is extremely busy with the special needs group sometimes having over 70 members attending. There is an ongoing funding drive to maintain the high levels of practical activities on offer. A stage for performances has recently been constructed and the Music Project is making full use of this provision.
- 2.3. At both Eastham and Bebington Youth Centres, Wirral Play Council is running a weekly teatime play session for the younger age range. These sessions are going well with high attendances. It is hoped that summer holiday play schemes will be also held in these venues.
- 2.4. Eastham Youth Club has planted seeds and tubers on a plot at the back of the outdoor play area for its second season of a gardening and healthy eating project. This activity has been extremely popular and the young people are currently considering renting an allotment nearby. It is hoped that the core group will grow and develop. Five members from the Club were recently awarded Youth Achievement Awards.
- 2.5. Youth Federation and Tranmere Together are running a short project offering Friday and Saturday activities for young people funded through Youth Crime Action Plan funding. There has been a wide selection of outings to various events and activities outside the Rock Ferry area which have been accessed by many young people from youth clubs in the district.

3.0. Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team

- 3.1. Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team (WYSOT) has continued with streetwork in locations throughout the borough. As a result of the 2,114 street contacts this quarter with youth workers, young people have been able to consider issues and obtain information about matters that may have a negative impact on their well being. Young people have taken advantage of opportunities to visit the theatre, including the Floral Pavilion and gain accreditation in first aid and in rock climbing. School holiday positive activity programmes have been well supported with WYSOT who have been the lead organisation in some situations and supported lead organisations from the voluntary sector in other situations.
- 3.2. In partnership with other agencies operating in the area, Birkenhead Youth Action Project is developing the range of opportunities available to young people in the Tranmere and Rock Ferry areas on Friday and Saturday nights. In the Clifton Park/Woodlands area, young people who had attended community meetings about facilities in their neighbourhood are now involved in developments for young people at Grange Baptist Church.
- 3.3. In the absence of a full-time Neighbourhood Youth Worker, Deeside Young People's Project has had to reduce the scope of its operation within the area. However, streetwork has been taking place in Upton, the parks in mid Wirral and on a Friday night in Overchurch and West Kirby. At February half term and during the Easter holiday period, the successful positive activities programme, delivered in partnership with the police, took place and there are plans for the extended schools to participate in future. A group from West Kirby have built on their previous success by achieving further climbing qualifications.
- 3.4. As part of their Youth Opportunities funded health project, young people from Fender Youth Action Project have successfully completed First Aid courses. Those under 16 gained community certificates whilst the over 16s gained an appointed person certificate for their work place. The first aid course identified the need for a programme of workshops to look at risk taking behaviour. The young people have also enjoyed visits to the theatre.
- 3.5. Noctorum Young People's Project undertakes streetwork with young people in public places that include the Noctorum Estate, the Townfield Lane vicinity and the Arno. Where appropriate, some of this work is undertaken with the support of Response substance misuse workers. On occasion, the youth workers work closely with parents to support the young people in their participation in a programme that addresses their needs, both in terms of life skills and physical activity. Ridgeway School Sports Hall continues to be used on a Monday night by several groups of young men.
- 3.6. Through streetwork, the North End Young People's Project (NEYPP) has made contact with a number of different groups who have gone on to plan programmes for their personal and social development. In addition to raising their awareness about the consequences of risk taking behaviour, the young people are encouraged to participate in activities that promote their well being and widen their horizons. Recently there have been visits to the theatre and dance workshops. NEYPP plays an active part in addressing anti social behaviour by being involved in Problem Solving Groups and focusing their attention on identified hot spots for anti-social behaviour.
- 3.7. The appointment of a full time worker to the Seacombe Young People's Project has enabled the development of Friday and Saturday activities. Much of this work is being undertaken in partnership with other agencies that have a presence in the area. Young people are being encouraged to participate in Wirral wide activities such as a young women's bowling competition and a Wallasey area football competition held on a Friday night.
- 3.8. South Wirral Young People's Project maintains their evening presence in locations in public places where young people are to be found. Other evening work includes the Friday night football session run in partnership the police, with the support of sports development coaches. South Wirral Young People's Project has delivered a February half term and an

Easter holiday Positive Activities programme, based at Bebington High School. Environmental work at Eastham skate park and at Bromborough Police Station, where two flower beds were created, has also been undertaken at Easter. As part of a programme to develop greater mutual understanding, a session about the role and responsibilities of the police was held at Eastham Youth Centre. The young people not only had the opportunity to walk through the 'Knife Arch' and to look at other equipment used by the police to tackle crime and anti social behaviour, but also to talk to the police about issues of concern to them.

- 3.9. The Wallasey Young People's Project (WYPP) has undertaken a range of work with young people. As well as sign posting young people to resources in their locality, WYPP has continued to be responsive to young peoples' risk taking behaviour by delivering awareness raising sessions at the point of contact with young people. One group has achieved accreditation for a climbing course whilst others enjoyed visits to the theatre and the bowling alley. In addition to involvement in the Youth Forum, young people from Wallasey have been involved with the consultation concerning the development of facilities for young people at Wallasey Fire Station.

4.0. **Wallasey and West Wirral Districts**

- 4.1. Four young people from Fender Youth Club attended an internet safety course where they learnt about staying safe, having fun and being in control. Staff attendance at a DAAT event in Woodchurch High School to promote the service to young people has generated new members to the club. Many new young people have signed up to the Virtual Baby project. A group of 15 young people went mountain biking in Delamere Forest, this was an activity jointly funded and delivered by Fender Youth Club and Merseyside Police.
- 4.2. Leasowe Youth Club is working in partnership with Response and Wirral Youth Theatre to develop a DVD to prevent homelessness. The DVD will be shown in schools across Wirral as part of prevention workshops. Eight young people attended the Mother Goose pantomime at the Everyman Theatre.
- 4.3. Moreton Youth Club is in the process of installing a MC room. The young people have been looking at health and safety, completing risk assessments, and developing rules for the room. There have been workshops on stress and peer pressure linked to body image. Young people are also involved in a creative cooking project focusing on eating healthy.
- 4.4. West Kirby Youth Club had an MC forum night to introduce new members to the group. During the session they reviewed the ground rules and discussed their responsibilities in relation to equipment, sound out put levels and the inclusion of new members. Young people from Rock Ferry, Seacombe, Prenton and Moreton are now attending these nights. The club has also been running workshops on smoking and the dangers of the sun and tanning.
- 4.5. St Mary's School Youth Club has an active Duke of Edinburgh Award programme with young people currently learning and developing skills around navigation, first aid and physical fitness. As part of their Award, some 95 young people from the unit are currently volunteering in the community. In March 65 young people took part in Saturday orienteering events across Wirral.

5.0. **Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts (WYT)**

- 5.1. The Spring/Summer WYT in-house and outreach programme is thriving and is publicised in the Pacific Road brochure and the newly launched website. Activities and projects include a weekly open programme of participative arts, work based and accredited training, outreach provision in communities and a number of specific projects.
- 5.2. In March, the WYT Peer Education Outreach Theatre Company was commissioned to perform their issue based drama piece, 'Swings and Roundabouts', at a regional youth work conference at Halton Stadium. The piece looks at the risks some young people may take on

a night out in a park and was used to launch the conference which focussed on exploring issues related to young people and alcohol. The play was well received by an audience of young people, professionals and Government Officers. Merseyside Police have now commissioned a week of performances for all schools in July at Pacific Road as well as another tour of parks in the school holidays.

- 5.3. Also in March other members of the Peer Education Outreach Company performed another tailor made drama piece at a regional Society of Doctors conference in Preston. The young people also facilitated a workshop for doctors and other health workers as part of this training event.
- 5.4. 'My Ideal Teacher' DVD produced by the Peer Education Outreach Company has now been launched and distributed to all schools and is intended to be used as part of a training pack for teachers. This project is part of Wirral's participation strategy to enable the voice of children and young people to be heard.
- 5.5. The dance development work with young men, funded by Schools Sports Development as part of their extended schools programme, has been re-commissioned for another year to continue to develop dance opportunities for young men across Wirral. The aim is to encourage more young men to access other progression routes and opportunities in dance and the work has also had a direct positive effect on the increased numbers of young men now attending the in-house dance provision.
- 5.6. WYT is also supporting a group of young men from Birkenhead North and Wallasey who are working towards setting up safe training and performance opportunities for break-dance crews across Wirral. This group, who have name themselves 'Contembreak', applied to the YOF to help develop their ideas and they have received £15k to take this project Wirral wide.
- 5.7. In addition to the in-house dance, WYT has also been commissioned to deliver dance programmes in schools across Wirral. The team supported by the Dance Peer Educators, also delivered workshops at the Floral Pavilion Family Dance Event.
- 5.8. The core of the WYT 'Sound Steps' music programme is funded externally by the National Foundation for Youth Music and has created a wide range of music related opportunities for young people including first access and more advanced skill building. The current funding came to an end in February and the range of music projects culminated in a performance night at Pacific Road. The night was a great success with over 12 acts performing a range of styles and music genres to an audience of over 300 friends, family and youth projects.
- 5.9. WYT is also facilitating the Wirral aspect of a pan Merseyside Music project called Reverberate. The WYT vocal group, 'Specific Grove', also performed at the Picket in Liverpool as part of the Reverberate launch, where one of the WYT young promoters from the Voltage Music Volunteer Programme was MC for the night. From May 2009 WYT will be running a music project for young women which again will culminate in a performance and the production of a CD of their work.
- 5.10. Voltage is part of the V National Volunteering Programme. WYT has been selected as one of five projects across England to run the scheme and is representing the North West. WYT has been funded to work with volunteers aged 16 -25, known as Youth Music Ambassadors, to train them to co-facilitate music activities and to promote volunteers opportunities for young people across Wirral. They also receive a range of accreditation for the achievements. The first cohort is due to complete their training programme at the end of April and will be presented with their V50 and Bronze Arts awards at an event facilitated by Wirral CVS. The next course will begin in June; the current group will be involved in the recruitment campaign and will mentor the new group through the programme. The current group have also produced a Voltage promotional DVD and workshop package which they will be taking out to schools and youth groups to help with recruitment.

5.11. In November 2009 WYT will be staging a brand new, contemporary music theatre production entitled 'EGAMI'. From February onwards the focus of the school holiday times and post-summer provision will be on working with young people to devise this musical theatre production. The production will use the theme of 'image' as a stimulus for the creative work and will involve young people from all the in-house and outreach projects. The first block of workshops took place in February half term providing activities each day with a performance and sharing of their work at the end of the week. The next stage will involve representatives from each of these workshop groups going away on a creative residential to develop their ideas towards a final script and score.

6.0 Response

6.1 New service level agreements / contracts are being drawn up this quarter which will enable the Drug and Alcohol team to continue to deliver services to young people across the borough.

6.2. The Drug and Alcohol Outreach Team have had 481 referrals into service this quarter. There have been 358 referrals from the Police Young People's Alcohol Intervention Programme project, 73 from Accident and Emergency and 50 from other sources. 58 young people have been provided with brief interventions and a further 87 young people and/or families have received a simple intervention. This quarter there has been 32 individuals reporting a reduction in substance misuse following a brief intervention. The team have delivered 29 evaluated substance misuse sessions to target groups of young people and have provided 595 young people with substance misuse information following large events. In addition, the team has also engaged with 429 targeted individuals through street work and/or house calls.

6.3. An alcohol drop in has been developed this quarter. The drop in aims to encourage young people, with or without their parents/carers, to come in for an informal discussion on the risks, consequences and impact of alcohol misuse. In April the outreach team aim to restart the Saturday evening street work to engage with groups of young people in the hotspot areas identified through the Young People's Alcohol Intervention Programme.

6.4. Over the three-month period from January-March there were 77 new referrals into the counselling team. A large number of these referrals have been from Response staff, parents, Youth Offending Service, local hostels, local training agencies, GP's, looked after children's nurse, Kooth and self referrals and schools. A total of 140 individual young people have used the service on 242 occasions.

6.5. Issues that have been presented in counselling have included family breakdown, dealing with parents' divorce, relationship breakdown, bereavement, sexuality, feelings of abandonment, living alone in accommodation, dealing with a parent's mental health problems and parent's problems related to their alcohol and drug use. Dealing with some of these issues has at times left some of the young people feeling suicidal or wanting to harm themselves in some way. Relationships of all kinds continue to be a huge issue that young people present for counselling. The Response outreach team have been active and instrumental in delivering sexual health sessions to some of the young people who are currently engaged with the counselling team.

6.6. The Housing support team has seen 195 young people between January and March this year. As projected, the Stop Gap support programme is currently working intensively with 14 young people with more complex needs to avoid rough sleeping, homelessness or entering bed and breakfast accommodation. The project is working well and was recently cited by job centre under 18's advisors as 'life changing' for clients.

7.0 Duke of Edinburgh's Award

- 7.1. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) in Wirral continues to adapt well to recent changes within the programme. The majority of youth workers, teachers, volunteers and adults with responsibility for delivering the DofE have now been briefed on the changes and have attended a number of relevant training courses. A programme of continual professional development that will include higher levels of emergency aid and enhanced risk assessments is now being embarked on.
- 7.2. The Open Award Centre continues to operate from the Wirral Alternative Schools Programme premises on Monday and Tuesday evenings. It is envisaged this arrangement will continue until November following which, facilities may be available at Mill Lane Fire Station.
- 7.3. A group of young people in the care of the local authority have just successfully completed their Bronze expedition. The training, preparation and implementation of this was due largely, to a successful Youth Opportunity Fund bid.
- 7.4. Over 150 young people recently received their Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards from the Deputy Mayor of Wirral at a reception in Wallasey Town Hall. Nine other Gold recipients are due to visit St. James's Palace to receive their certificates from HRH Prince Philip.

8.0 International Work/ Special Needs

- 8.1. The current senior member training course has now finished with all participants receiving their certificates. This training allows the members to assist in the youth unit by collecting subs, recording attendances and other such tasks and gives them an insight into the workings of the Youth Service. The next course starts later in the year.
- 8.2. The Hong Kong exchange group are working well together and making good progress towards their fundraising total. The group continue to meet on a fortnightly basis and the theme for this year's exchange is 'Youth Participation'. The Chinese group of young people visit Wirral from 12 - 25 July and the Wirral group will visit Hong Kong from 6 - 21 September with an overnight visit to the mainland over the first weekend.
- 8.3. The second international project for this year is a multi-national project with Portugal, France, Macedonia, Poland and the U.K. The venue will be Ponta Delgada in the Azores and group members for this project are currently being recruited. This visit will be part funded by the EU 'Youth in Action' programme with the balance being raised by the young people.
- 8.4. Callister Youth Club continues to meet twice a week with the next project being a short course on disability awareness and an introduction to British Sign Language.
- 8.5. The renovation and decoration of Ivy Farm has now been completed due to the efforts of the Friends of Ivy Farm over the past four years. The Friends are the young people who have used the farm, mainly for international exchanges and who wished to put something back into the bunkhouse. Besides fundraising the bulk of the finance has come from small grants from the Youth Capital Fund.
- 8.6. The Belvidere Centre continues its work with disabled young people and continues to offer a full challenging programme of activities. The members are currently working towards their bronze award for the Health Promoting Youth Club programme. The club is open four evenings a week.

9.0. Play Service

- 9.1. The new Children's Play BIG Lottery programme was launched in March 2009 providing new play opportunities across Wirral. The activities are free of charge and delivered on an open access basis in areas of identified need.
- 9.2. The Community Play Rangers Project has been commissioned to Wirral Play Council. The project delivers 30 borough-wide play sessions in parks and informal open spaces for children aged 5 -13 years. The presence of playworkers makes children feel safer about playing out and provides opportunities to socialise with their peers and join in physical activities. The current play sites supported are located in:
Irby Playing Fields, Ridgewood Park - Pensby, Grange & Newton Park - West Kirby, Ryecroft Park, Demesne Street , Luke St. play area - Seacombe, Central Park- Liscard, Harrison Park, Wallacre play area , Tower Grounds, Vale Park- New Brighton & Wallasey, Prenton Dell Estate, Town Lane & Mayer Park -Bebington, Port Causeway - New Ferry, Mersey Park – Tranmere, Bedford Road – Rock Ferry, Yee Tree play area and Lingham Park – Moreton, Kellsall play area, Eastham skate park – Eastham, Brookhurst park and Brombrough recreation ground, Meadow Crescent, Woodchurch – Coronation park – Greasby, Meols Park, Grove Road – Hoylake, Whitfield Common and the Puddydale, Heswall.
- 9.3. The Play Practitioners Project, 'Play Points', also commissioned to Wirral Play Council delivers open access play sessions in specific venues. The project endeavours to work with community groups to develop, plan and deliver free play activities in identified areas of need. This will enable the dissemination of good practice, involve children and young people in design and delivery and increase access to local play provision. This provides regular indoor and outdoor play sessions for children 5-13 years in the following locations:
Bebington Youth Centre – New Ferry
Eastham Youth Club
Noctorum Community Centre
Woodchurch Community Centre
Overton Community Centre
- 9.4. Practitioners working closely with agencies, children and their families in areas of identified need will meet several of the outcomes identified in the Wirral Play Strategy's priorities and Implementation plan 2007-2012. The total registration to date is 276 children.
- 9.5. Wirral Play Council carried out some consultation with children in year 6 from Meols Primary school. The children worked in groups and shared ideas and thoughts about what they do in their free time and where they spent it. After the initial discussion the children described their "ideal" playground or park. All the children chose to draw pictures of activities, pieces of equipment and the environment they would like to see in their local park. The drawings were very descriptive and included tree houses, tunnels, logs to jump over, big slides, swings, water play and many other exciting and adventurous ideas. These ideas will be used to inform the design plans for the redevelopment of the Meols play area.
- 9.6. Wirral Council applied to DCSF in 2008 to be a Play Pathfinder and was awarded Playbuilder status. The funding allocation offered to Wirral Council under Playbuilder status is £1,129,445 capital and £45,648 revenue. Match funding is not required, however, any additional external funding which can be secured will enhance any new development in the play areas and provide wider scope for activity.
- 9.7. Over the two-year programme period, 2009-2011, this funding will support the development (or redevelopment) of a minimum of 22 play areas across Wirral. Revenue funding can be used at the discretion of the local authority for relevant activities to support the development of the scheme. The programme will have to meet the following vision of National Play Strategy produced by DCSF and Play England.

- More places to play , high quality places to play near to where children and families live
 - Supporting play throughout childhood – Access for all children to play, more opportunities through new Surestart centres and Building Schools for the future, a toolkit to support Councils inform parents and children
 - Playing safely – increased supervision, safer routes to play, 20 mph zones around play areas and schools, support local volunteering
 - Child-friendly communities – children involved in design and planning, communities more tolerant of children’s play and children respect view of others
 - Embedding play in local priorities – new national indicator, children’s and young people’s satisfaction with parks and play areas, respond to children’s play needs in service plans, supporting active play through the health sector
- 9.8. The initial Play Pathfinder application has been prepared by officers from Youth and Play Service and the Parks & Countryside Service (Regeneration Department). This has led to further joint working on the development of the project plan required by DCSF. An action plan has been submitted to DCSF for approval meeting the 30 March deadline. The plan will explain how it is intended to comply with the key criteria and lists the 22 proposed sites to be developed.
- 9.9. Due to the timescales involved and the grant conditions, year one projects have been selected based on previous consultation, existing community driven projects, match funding opportunities and also sites where there are strong user/friends groups.
- 9.10. Initial year two sites have been proposed as part of the requirement of the PlayBuilder project plan. However, these sites will be subject to further consultation and negotiation to ensure a strategic approach to the location of play areas.
- 9.11. The delivery of the Play Builder programme will be commissioned to the Parks & Countryside Service and managed by a Senior Project manager who will provide quarterly reports to the Strategic Lead for Play in the Youth & Play Service. This will be reported to the Wirral Play Partnership and the Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee (YAPSAC) and when appropriate Cabinet update reports will be submitted. The Project manager will also have to report to the monthly Departmental Capital Monitoring Group.
- 9.12. A new national indicator for play, NI 199, children’s and young people’s satisfaction with parks and play areas will be rolled out from April 2009, which will run alongside the Play Builder programme.
- 10.0. Training and Staff Development**
- 10.1. The first candidates of the current programme have gained their Level 2 NVQ in Youth Work, with the rest of the cohort to follow soon. The next intake of up to 15 will be inducted at the end April after a recruitment and selection process.
- 10.2. A revised Service Level Agreement with Wirral Metropolitan College is still being negotiated, but it is expected to make the funding stream for the programme more secure and enable an additional assessor to be appointed, which could increase opportunities at Level 3.
- 10.3. Liverpool JMU has recently reviewed its portfolio of awards and has decided to discontinue the DipHE and BA courses leading to professional youth worker status with immediate effect. Wirral was a key player in initiating the course back in the mid-90s when it grew out of an apprenticeship initiative to enable local people enter higher education and gain professional status. Over the years a significant number of youth service staff and local residents have successfully completed the programme and many are now employed in higher grade positions as a result of the local opportunity to progress.

- 10.4. Representations have been made to the Vice-Chancellor by the Merseyside local authorities as local employers and a meeting has been arranged with him to explore local demand and alternative funding streams.
- 10.5. Youth Service is in the process of linking to the Department's Capita "ONE" system. A consultant from Capita is working with the service to develop a system to improve data collection and reporting. As with most IT initiatives, they take longer to develop and refine than expected. While the target launch date of 1 April has passed, it is hoped that it will be operational soon. The new system will have training implications for staff across the service.
- 10.6. First Aid Training will be taking place in June. Many individuals continue with professional development across a variety of themes – management, training, housing and homelessness, health and accreditation.
- 11.0. **Youth Participation**
- 11.1. Training for the Executive Youth Board (EYB) took place on the 3 and 10 February, where the group covered areas of chairing meetings and effective minute taking. The EYB have now identified the action for their ECM priority areas and are planning meetings with key elected members and chief officers.
- 11.2. After the first round of applications, the Grant Panel allocated all of the £100,000 Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) set aside for 2009/2010. This was a particularly difficult process, as the fund was heavily oversubscribed. A second round of applications for Youth Capital Fund (YCF) was organised as this fund was undersubscribed in the first round. The fund was heavily oversubscribed in the second round, but the Grant Panel have now allocated all of the funds.
- 11.3. A YOF Commissioning sub group has now been formed, with members drawn from the Grant Panel, Executive Youth Board and UKYP representatives. This group will be allocating nearly £300,000 from the 2009/2010 YOF for young people's access to leisure facilities and transport. A number of key agencies and workers who can advise this group have now been identified and meetings are planned to take place in May/June.
- 11.4. The United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) elections were held during February, with 18 young people standing. The two young people elected as deputies are Monica Boughdady and Paul Aitchison. The outgoing Members of Youth Parliament (MYP) are Jade Jones and Alex Hick. Jade has decided to maintain her involvement with UKYP and is a Young Minister of Health, representing the North West region. This role will entail consulting with National Health Services and Primary Care Trusts across the North West in regards to school nursing, school clinics and young people's access to general healthcare. Jade has also submitted an agenda item to be voted for as a national campaign for UKYP. This is about the international monetary fund and the management of debt in developing countries.
- 11.5. Six young people from the EYB, Grant Panel and UKYP representatives attended the annual Circles of Influence event on 6 February. Two of the UKYP representatives chaired discussion groups. Issues debated were transport and education with key decision makers, such as representatives from Government Office North West, Association of Chief Police Officers.
- 11.6. One deputy MYP attended a North West Regional meeting with the Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith on the 29 January at Government Office North West. The aim of this meeting was to discuss foreign policy, policing and the safe space agenda.
- 11.7. Four young people from the EYB, Grant Panel and UKYP attended a transport conference in London on the 19 February. The young people participated in workshops on sharing good practice and developing appropriate public transport services for young people i.e.

discount schemes, improving service routes and general transport infrastructures. This information will be used by the YOF commissioning sub group to inform their role to improve young people's access to transport in Wirral.

- 11.8. The North West Region held a UKYP and YOF/YCF residential on the 20 - 22 March at Trafford Hall. Six young people from Wirral attended (four UKYP representatives and two Grant Panel members). The aim for the UKYP representatives was to set the agenda for UKYP North West campaigns for the year and the Grant Panel were able to share implementing the funds i.e. methodology, good practice and thinking beyond 2011, when the funds cease.
- 11.9. Four young people attended the regional alcohol conference in Halton on the 26 March. The young people were targeted to be representative and came from Response, Wirral Outreach Team and the Young Minister of Health. The discussion groups looked at the impact of alcohol on young people and working towards solutions and strategies for harm reduction.
- 11.10. The next round of Youth Forums will take place on the 21 May. A meeting with the Neighbourhood Youth Workers who organise these meetings was held to identify how to enable the current different groups of young people involved in decision making to effectively communicate with each other and the wider population of young people in the borough.
- 11.11. A number of consultations with young people are due to take place in the next couple of months. These will be led by the UKYP, EYB and Grant Panel representatives. The three themes are: school nursing/clinics, things to do and places to go for young people and spatial planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the report.

Lindsay Davidson
Acting Head of Youth & Play Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to update the Committee about the developments of the Virtual Babies/Teenage Pregnancy Project. The Committee is asked to note the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 This project developed from a discussion between a group of young people and a youth worker from Fender Youth Club, around the young people's aspirations to become young parents and their need to experience the realities of parenthood. This led on to the young people putting in a Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) bid for five virtual babies. This project is run in conjunction with Response and Merseyside Police.

2 Virtual Baby/Teenage Pregnancy Project

- 2.1 The babies are used as a tool for young people to complete a ten week sexual health/ teenage pregnancy programme. The sessions covered in this programme are:
- Two sexual health and relationship sessions- delivered by Response
 - Ambitions for the future session
 - Police workshop- covering alcohol and sexual activity etc
 - Effects of alcohol and drugs on a foetus, using drug and alcohol baby simulators
 - 'Preparation 4 Baby'- 'Bump', using pregnancy simulator
 - 'Preparation 4 baby'- What you and baby will need
 - 'Preparation 4 Baby - Handel with Care' (shaken baby), using simulator baby
 - Pressures and problems - DVD
 - Preparation for baby - parenting class
- 2.2 After these sessions are complete the young people take their baby home for the weekend and are responsible for all the aspects of caring for the baby during the day and night.
- 2.3 The aim of this programme is not to put young people off having children, but to ensure they have all the information about the realities of parenthood in order that they can make informed choices about when they would like to start a family.
- 2.4 The project equips young people with the information and knowledge to protect themselves in order for them to be safe and not engage in risky sexual behaviour.

3. Outcomes and Impacts

- 3.1. The project provides young people with information around sexual health and staying safe. It allows young people to explore the realities of caring for a baby and how to look after them safely.
- 3.2. 22 young people have participated in the course to date. 16 of these young people have successfully completed the course, gaining an accredited outcome in the form of a certificate of completion from Life Choices.
- 3.3. Links have been made with the Woodchurch High School. The school promotes the course to their students so there is always an ongoing demand. The next course starts in April 2009.

3.4. Another high school and a college have made inquiries about the project.

3.5. Comments from young people who have participated:

"I have learnt about the pressures of having a baby young and what happens if a child is not being treated properly"

"I have learnt that it is hard to cope with having a baby when your young and all the pressures of it"

"That you can call the police if you feel unsafe"

"What it would be like to be pregnant and the effects on babies from drugs and alcohol"

"How much a baby costs"

"How to stay safer in situations"

"That it is hard to work out what a baby wants"

"That I don't want a baby young"

4. Future Developments

4.1. Following on from the last funding bid the young people secured further funding from YOF to fund another five babies and a training course in February 2009. The course will train young people, who have already been through the project, how to deliver the course to other young people.

4.2. This development will mean that the course will have a greater impact being peer led and will be delivered to many more young people in the local area and eventually Wirral wide.

5. Financial implications

5.1. The Youth Club now has all the equipment to deliver the course to groups of ten young people at a time. The only other financial implications are the up keep of the equipment.

6. Staffing implications

6.1. This project is supported by Fender Youth Club's staffing establishment.

7. Equal opportunities implications

7.1. The first two cohorts have been female; workers are addressing this, making it assessable for males.

8. Community safety implications

8.1. There are none

9. Local Agenda 21 implications

9.1. There are none.

10. Planning implications

10.1. There are none.

11. Anti-poverty implications

11.1. This is a life skills course, giving young people the knowledge and understanding to make informed life choices, improving their quality of life.

12. **Social inclusion implications**

12.1. There are none.

13. **Local Member Support implications**

13.1. This report affects Irby/Frankby/Greasby/Upton ward.

14. **Background papers**

14.1. There are none.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

(1) The Committee notes the report.

Howard Cooper

Director of Children's Services

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