

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report advises the Committee of the work undertaken by the Youth and Play Service since the last meeting in September 2010. The Committee is asked to note the report.

1. Staff Movements

- 1.1. Ten members of staff left the Youth Service on 31st December 2010 as part of the recent voluntary severance/early voluntary retirement exercise. Several of the leavers occupied management roles within the Service, frontline staff have remained in the Service which will ensure that there is no reductions to the opening hours and/or operations of youth provision in Wirral.
- 1.2. The majority of the staff who have left had been with the Service for 20 years or more. Their friends and colleagues in the Service acknowledge the significant contribution they have made over the years and wish them well for the future.

2.0. South Wirral and Birkenhead Districts

- 2.1. The Cavendish Youth Centre has seen an upsurge in attendances during the autumn period. Dance, pilates and fitness have been the focus of the girls group events and the member's group have organised a special Halloween party and the Club's Christmas festivities. The staff have run a number of workshops and discussion groups on the subject of alcohol awareness and appropriate behaviour on the streets.
- 2.2. The autumn period at Charing Cross has been busy with the establishment of monthly showcase events when the music project, in combination with volunteers, hosts an intergenerational big night for all members and people from the wider community. The Club is close to completing all the four awards of the accreditation.

Health Promoting Youth Unit (HPYU) fund raising is high on the agendas for both staff and young people and a monthly craft fair, has been organised where over £1,000 has been raised to date. Partnership work with the West African Caribbean Club is developing and over 30 looked after children attend the group regularly. The Club is open for young people with additional needs on a Monday and Thursday evenings.

- 2.3. The autumn months have been busy at Viking youth club, with a large number of exciting events taking place. A group of young people have enjoyed a trip to Alton Towers for their firework display. A course of creative cookery resulted in a selection of delicious cakes.
- 2.4. The Callister Youth Club offers integrated facilities for all young people and a broad and interesting programme of educational visits, arts, crafts and sport. Working with Aiming High for Disabled Children, the club is publicising its programme and the numbers of young people regularly attending has increased.
- 2.5. Bebington Youth Club regular activities include the popular computer suite, sports hall activities, snooker and table tennis. Environmental clean up and gardening projects are increasingly catching the imagination and interest of young people. A shoebox appeal for the troops in Afghanistan is complete. The club works closely in partnership and with the support of Bebington

Rotary who have recently funded an internal programme of decoration. Planning permission has also been gained that will allow a cage to be built beside the Club to augment the facilities.

- 2.6. The South Wirral Hub is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays and Saturday. New members from the wider district are beginning to sign up for the broad range of activities that are now available. A bronze group for DoE has been formed with some young people gaining hours in the service section from work with in the club. Samba dancing has been introduced which is a fun way to exercise. Volunteers have taken on the management of the music room and host drumming and beat box sessions. The staff have delivered workshop sessions on healthy life styles including creative cookery and anti bullying and have hosted a successful event run by the prison service.
- 2.7. The ICE project at the Birkenhead District Hub has offered an exciting way for young people to be educated in alcohol awareness by their peers. The course ran for four weeks and resulted in significant and measurable learning for the group involved. Several health related workshops have taken place, including the dangers of excessive sun bed use, eating disorders and issues relating to cosmetic surgery. The urban garden is developing well and the care of the rabbits, chickens and ducks is proving a useful learning experience for young people. A club team has taken part in a north-western regional football tournament in Blackburn.
- 3.0. **Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team**
- 3.1. The Wirral Youth Service Outreach Team has continued to undertake work with young people in the public places in each of the Districts. There has been considerable success in the engagement of vulnerable young people resulting in good outcomes for them. Many young people have participated in positive activities and have particularly enjoyed the Halloween and October half term activities which all outreach projects delivered. The outreach youth workers have responded to the needs of the young people and afforded them the opportunity to learn about issues that are important to them. Not only have the young people considered their own physical well being, but have had the opportunity to participate in the Wirral's Future consultation.
- 3.2. The North Birkenhead Youth Outreach Project now has its main base at the old Gilbrook School site and has developed a strategic approach to ensure that its Youth Offer is available across the area. A number of satellite bases or points of contact at Ridgeway High School, Gautby Road Play Centre, Charing Cross Youth Club and at the St James Centre are now being used to ensure a more local and responsive delivery of service to the young people. A comprehensive package of support, advice, guidance together with opportunistic interventions and structured group work have enabled the young people to consider sex and relationships, bullying, teenage pregnancy, disability and career development. The Youth Opportunity Fund financed an October holiday activity programme which included a football competition at Birkenhead Youth Club, organised in partnership with the Police.
- 3.3. The South Birkenhead Youth Outreach Project has also relocated to the old Gilbrook School site and makes use of satellite bases and points of contact across the area. Collaborative work and joint work is being developed with other providers and streetwork is being undertaken in new locations so that vulnerable young people not previously in touch with the Youth Service can now have access to youth workers. The visible presence of the English Defence League in this part of the borough is a cause for concern and is being monitored with intelligence being fed to the police and racial equality monitoring groups.
- 3.4. The North West Wallasey Youth Outreach Project makes use of the Kontakta Bus for issue based work around sex and relationship education and substance misuse, run in partnership with Response staff. The Friday night session in Harrison Park where the youth workers work along side Sports Development coaches to provide a choice of activities for young people, continues to be well supported. The base at Leasowe is a good resource and young people planning the activity programme meet there. Recently, there was a theatre trip and a weekend in London is being planned for the New Year. The streetwork aspect of the project is being developed in new locations in Moreton and at locations co-terminus with West Wirral.

- 3.5. The South East Wallasey Youth Outreach Project also makes use of the Kontakta Bus for issue based work with the various street groups with the Terence Higgins Trust delivering a series of sex and relationship education sessions. Autumn activities have included visits to the cinema, go-karting, laser quest, bowling and a Halloween party. Based in the Wallasey Hub, the Project undertakes some joint activities and projects with the Hub staff. A project targeting those not in education, training or employment, with the aim of re-engaging the young people is being planned with Oldershaw School.
- 3.6. The West Wirral Youth Outreach Project undertakes streetwork with groups of young people across the district and has worked with others to increase the uptake of positive activities. The Friday evening multi sports night run in partnership with DAF funded Sports Development coaches is well attended and the young people will have the opportunity to gain DofE accreditation for their involvement. In Greasby, the Thursday evening football session in Coronation Park is enjoyed and an indoor venue for the winter is being sought. The Project has played an active role in addressing anti social behaviour and has been an effective partner in a variety of localised initiatives. The District Youth Worker undertakes groupwork at Woodchurch High School as part of the PHSE curriculum.
- 3.7. The South Wirral Youth Outreach Project continues to undertake streetwork in South Wirral which leads to the young people's involvement in a varied programme of positive activities and issue based sessions. In celebration of their achievements, members of the Vision Media group are producing a calendar which illustrates the activities they have undertaken. The Trailblazers Project mountain biking project, delivered in partnership with the Police and the Fire Service, is progressing well and young people from the Family Inclusion Programme have joined the group. At half term, the CELLS Project visited the South Wirral Hub and enabled young people from across Wirral to listen to facts and real life experiences of people who had become involved in gangs and crimes as well as trying out some alternative activities including poetry and non contact boxing.

4.0. **Wallasey and West Wirral Districts**

- 4.1. West Wirral Youth Hub took part in its second project with Friends of Grange Park (FROG), namely, the Lantern Making Project. This was a successful joint project which ran for two months and engaged twenty plus young people celebrating St. Martin's day and Peace. There have been three 'Youth-Fest' Parties from October to December engaging eighty plus young people with support from local police, the Anti Social Behaviour Team and local young people who took part in Djing and Mcing for these events. This has given the young people of West Wirral the opportunity to see the Hub and access the provision. There has been a alcohol project running in the Hub in partnership with ICE Marketing and Wirral DAAT. HPYU work is ongoing with the Hub getting closer to the Bronze award. A group of seven young people are now senior members and they steer the activities offered and organise the 'Youth Fest' parties etc.
- 4.2. Fender Youth Club has had a few staffing issues, which has meant the youth offer for young people has had to be reduced. Young people have access to the core facilities in the youth club i.e., computer room, coffee bar and pool tables. When there has not been enough staff to open the Youth Club, staff have done outreach on the estate, keeping young people in touch with what is happening for them in the area.
- 4.3. Greasby Youth Club have been running projects working towards their health promoting status. They have covered topics around risk taking behaviour. During the summer the pavilion had a fire through an electrical fault, since this has happened the project has not been able to run from that location.
- 4.4. Wallasey Youth Hub took young people to see Somebody's Son- a production by the Wirral Youth Theatre. Young people have been accessing guitar lessons as well as drumming and music workshops, these have been provided by the Wirral Youth Theatre. In November there was a virtual baby open day and 15 young people have signed up to be involved in the course. There

have been regular sex and relationship workshops to help reduce teenage pregnancy. Four young people have been working as senior members; they are working towards their V Award. Young people have been involved in a cooking project which encourages young people to understand what is in the food they eat and to make meals from scratch. This is leading towards the HPYU Bronze Award. Some of the activities that have happened around Bonfire night and Halloween have been Football Tournaments, Halloween Party, Alton Towers trip and Fire Safety Presentations.

- 4.5. Leasowe Youth Club operates a drop in two nights a week, where young people can come and meet their friends in a safe environment and talk about issues that are affecting them. This can be informal or more structured pieces of work, some of the topics covered have been around self-esteem, drugs awareness and body image. There have been various trips out, mountain biking in Delamere forest, go karting and an ice skating trip. In December young people visited an elderly people's home where they helped put up decorations and sang carols to the residents.
- 4.6. St Mary's Youth Club runs Duke of Edinburgh, Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. Young people have been preparing and going on expeditions putting what they have learnt into practice volunteering in the community. They also take an active involvement in the running of the other club nights. The Tuesday club is for young people with additional needs, the activities young people take part in have been discos, various sports and arts and craft. Young people went to see the schools performance 'Mama Mia'. Eighty young people took part in a Wirral way walk from West Kirby to Hooton.
- 4.7. Moreton Youth Club has been running cooking workshops introducing young people to different foods from across the world; this has been followed up by workshops about different cultures. The club hosted a Christmas party where past members were invited to come along, this was a success with ex members and ex staff mixing with current members, sharing stories about what it was like when they were part of the youth club.
- 4.8. Belvidere Youth Club have been advertising what happens in the club through young people producing flyers and a monthly magazines. Activities young people have been involved include bowling trips and a trip to Church Farm for Halloween. Young people have also been involved in an anti bullying project, healthy eating (Change for Life) and sex and relationship workshops.
- 5.0. **Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts (WYT)**
- 5.1. Wirral Youth Theatre has now relocated and is settling in to what was Gilbrook School in Birkenhead. The new base provides WYT with the much needed space to continue to deliver and develop an even greater range of participative arts activities for young people from across Wirral. The current membership are extremely pleased with their new 'home' and the WYT team are now looking forward to working with partners to develop the venue as a centre of excellence for Youth and Community Arts in Wirral.
- 5.2. WYT's young people's Outreach Company – 'First Class' - completed their tour of 'Somebody's Son' to the four District Youth Hubs and six schools which were Woodchurch, Park High, Rock Ferry, Ridgeway, Plessington and the Observatory School. The cast and crew of young people aged 16 -19 from WYT's Peer Education project devised and performed the piece which explored why young people are at risk of using violence to gain the respect of their peers. It looks at the consequences of violent behaviour caused by peer pressure and the ripple effect this can have on the protagonist, victims, families and communities. The piece was also performed at Pacific Road to a full house including Outreach Youth Groups and young people from Response and Connexions. Over 1000 young people in total saw the piece and the feedback has been extremely positive. Due to popular demand, 'Somebody's Son' will be toured to more schools and youth groups across Wirral in the Spring. Another issue based piece will also be developed to tour later in the year. Some of the group are currently involved in devising a short health related piece commissioned by the North West Society of Doctors to be performed at two of their training conferences early in 2011.

5.3. WYT will also be delivering a new Peer Education course accredited by the open college northwest which will enable young people 16+ to gain accredited youth arts facilitation skills. This will be piloted from October as part of the nationally funded Voltage Music Course.

5.4. WYT worked in partnership with another organisation called ICE to deliver a pilot project using peer mentoring to raise awareness around alcohol and risk taking behaviour. The project was commissioned by the DAAT and WYT contributed to the training programme and will also be involved in facilitating a follow project with the group of young people involved in the course.

Young people from a range of on-going dance groups facilitated by WYT have taken part in several regional projects including Youth Dance England events at the Floral Pavilion. The dance team has also delivered training for Dance Leaders in Schools. The Inclusion Dance company which trains and supports young dancers aged 16 -19, are running a workshop and performing at the Claire House Christmas Dance. The dance team has also run two dance workshop days for young men at St Anselms as part of their School Health Days. The dance group also performed at the Youth Parliament and took an active part in the discussion groups.

5.5. 'Voltage' is part of V - the National Volunteering Programme - and WYT has been selected as one of five projects across England to run the scheme and represent the North West. WYT has been funded by the National Foundation for Youth Music to work with volunteers aged 16 -25 known as Youth Music Ambassadors and to train them to co-facilitate music activities and promote volunteer opportunities. The new Voltage group for 2010 – 2011 has now started their training and participants will achieve OCN accreditation for peer mentoring and will work on a range of music projects taking place at WYT's new venue and in Youth Hubs and Clubs. They will also create an interactive issue based performance which will be delivered schools in March.

5.6. The new general music programme will begin in late January with band development sessions, beat box, digital composition and vocal projects – including Swing and Big Band - culminating in regular performances entitled 'Live and Loud' for young bands and 'Live and Lounge' for acoustic performances.

5.7. Commissioned by the District Activity Fund (DAF), WYT continues to run a range of Urban Arts workshops in Youth Clubs and Youth Hubs in each of four districts including dance for young men, mixed dance groups and music. In October half term WYT received funding from The National Foundation for Youth Music to run additional music tasters as part of National Youth Music Week. Wallasey and South Wirral Youth Hubs took this opportunity up and over 60 young people took part in vocal and samba drumming workshops. The DAF workshops will help young people to expand on these experiences and projects will culminate in a big performance event at the end of March which will celebrate their talent and commitment.

5.8. WYT continues to run an ongoing programme of Saturday dance and drama sessions for children in care to help develop their skills and self esteem. The young people are now working towards a performance at Wallasey Town Hall in January at their presentation ceremony. Many of the young people from this group have integrated into the other WYT projects and some have progressed onto becoming Peer Educators and, as such are now excellent role models for other young people.

5.9. WYT has developed a close working partnership with Claire House and for the second year has provided the Halloween Haunted Walk in Birkenhead Park as part of their fundraising strategy. This involved fifty young people from the Monday night dance and drama sessions in devising and performing a series of short performances as part of a scary journey through the park. The event was fully booked and was well received by audiences of children and parents.

5.10. WYT has worked in partnership with the Education Psychology team to deliver participative dance and drama activities as a way to enable pupils to express themselves and find ways to deal with stress and gain self and mutual respect. The project was piloted with Rock Ferry High School and has worked successfully in St Paul's Primary School supported by the Peer

Educators. The programme will be rolled out to Gilbrook, Kilgarth and Rock Ferry schools from January to March.

6.0 Response

- 6.1 Response continues to support the vulnerable complex needs of young people on Wirral. The Housing support team has had contact with 300 young people between July - December and provided 720 sessions for support around housing issues. The team has been busy dealing with predominantly 16/17 year olds who have been asked to leave home for various reasons. Some of those reasons include, family breakdown, bereavement within the family, domestic violence and substance misuse
- 6.2. The Housing Team has noticed an increase in the amount of young people presenting as a result of domestic violence incidents. Perpetrators have ranged from family members to partners. Some vulnerable females have managed to break the cycle, however some are currently still being supported to remain safe whilst choosing to continue the relationship
The Stop Gap Project is continuing to provide support to the most vulnerable, at risk young people.
- 6.3. Health Services in Schools continues to be successful and both Schools and commissioners are pleased with the outcomes of the service. Head teachers at a recent WASH commented on the service and have been particularly impressed with the bespoke offer made to schools which has enabled the service to connect positively with the school ethos. The service is attracting a good deal of young people into the clinics to talk about health matters and concerns or worries that affect them.
- 6.4. Over the six month period from July to December there were 171 new referrals into the Counselling Team, a large number of these referrals are from Schools, Response staff, Y.O.S, CAMHS, Social Care, Parents and local hostels. A total of 105 individuals have used the service and 489 sessions have been delivered. There are currently 46 young people on the waiting list, which at present is four to six weeks long. Young people presenting with suicidal ideation / attempts remains to be a concern for the service. Other Issues young people present with continue to be family breakdown or lack of communication within the family, loss / bereavement, issues from the past, bullying, problems at school, anger, low confidence and self esteem, substance related issues and self harm. The Service had four volunteer Counsellor's doing a placement at Response over this period, this reduced the waiting time, a new male volunteer is joining us at the beginning of the New Year.
- 6.5. Response are still continuing to provide regular slots of advice and guidance to the four Youth Hubs. During this period there have been contacts with 1764 young people.
- 6.6. The Outreach Team have engaged with young people during this period, giving information and advice to groups in a variety of settings. Partnership work with the Police on Operation Staysafe to reduce risk taking behaviour amongst young people continues to be a challenge particularly around the issue of alcohol. The team continue to deliver preventative messages to young people regarding the dangers of alcohol and other risk taking behaviours. The outreach team have delivered Bitesize events and have been involved with the Youth Parliament. The team have delivered numerous drug and alcohol workshops to target groups of young people and many one-to-one sessions, with a number of young people reporting a reduction of substance misuse as a result. In addition, parent groups have been provided with information and support.
- 6.7. National Alcohol Awareness week took place during this period. The team had responsibility for a Response Alcohol Awareness stall at Arrowe Park Hospital. The team engaged with parents, young people and staff in the hospital and discussed the the dangers of alcohol misuse. The team also supported the Alcohol Awareness Trailer in Birkenhead town centre, engaging with parents, young people and the general public about the Response service and delivered alcohol brief

interventions. Response continues to work in partnership with the hospital and offers support and guidance to parents and young people following alcohol-related Accident and Emergency Department admissions.

7.0 Duke of Edinburgh's Award (D of E Award)

- 7.1. All four Youth Hubs are now delivering the DofE Award as part of their curriculum. Although each Youth Hub is enabled to enrol participants and offer advice on the DofE generally, each unit is planning to offer specialisms that will assist young people with the completion of their Award. Wallasey Youth Hub is offering expedition training, Birkenhead Youth Hub specialises in physical recreation, South Wirral Youth Hub can assist with art and craft activities and West Wirral Hub is offering music workshops.
- 7.2. DofE continues to recruit and work with young people from the harder to reach areas by liaising with 6 organisations such as Connexions, Children in Care service, Social Services and an E2E programme.
- 7.3. In the last quarter of 2010 thirty-eight young people have successfully achieved their Gold Awards. In February 2011, twelve participants will visit St James's Palace to receive their certificates from HRH Prince Philip and a further eleven will be invited in March.
- 7.4. The adoption by Wirral DofE Operating Authority of the Award's eDofE system is proving to be a positive move. eDofE is the on-line electronic version of the old record book. It gives young people the ability to record their programme in a new way. It also gives them the opportunity to record evidence in a variety of formats including text, pictures and movies and enables leaders to view DofE evidence and approve it easily.

8.0. Play Service

- 8.1. Community Play Rangers provided by Wirral Play Council started the winter indoors programme at October half-term and will continue until March 2011. The winter programme is split into two sessions, an early session being outdoors and evening session indoors. This arrangement provides more sessions across Wirral and delivers both an outdoors play experience and warm play environment for children & young people. It is over half way into the duration of programme but it has almost achieved its three years target (see appendix 1). The project has a staff team of seven.
- 8.2. Play Rangers completed the Play Safe survey with 60 children. Staff asked children at the play sessions questions about how safe they feel and discussed their answers along with giving ideas on how they could keep themselves safe whilst playing out.
- 8.3. The Senior Play worker and a Play Ranger attended Halloween events in the local community. Children were encouraged to attend the Halloween events instead of knocking on houses they did not know. This helped to keep them safe whilst enjoying Halloween activities.
- 8.4. Play Rangers have attended various inclusive play sessions and disability and ADHD awareness courses. An inclusive sports course was particular inspirational, on how all children can participate in sport and games regardless of their additional needs.
- 8.5. During Road Safety Week children participated in awareness activities about how to safely cross roads and ways they can keep themselves safe. They also received reflective neon stickers to wear. Throughout the week across the Wirral 130 children attended the safety sessions.
- 8.6. PlayPoint themed weeks included the Spider Web challenge where children had to negotiate their way through a series of elastic cords and reach the opposite side without touching them.

The Cube event was a series of challenges children had to complete without losing one of their ten lives. This involved decision making, control and co ordination and promoted team building with their peers.

- 8.7. After a review of the existing programme, Play Point will be operating from Birkenhead Youth Hub one night a week. The project continues to work with local community groups and to link with the regional Inspire Programme coordinator to discuss how the 2012 Olympics can be used to inspire children at the play sessions.
- 8.8. The Play for All project has supported several children, enabling them to attend regular play sessions. For example two children with confidence issues attended sessions knowing they had support each week from an inclusion playworker. This has enabled these children to gain confidence and attend play schemes without additional support.
- 8.9. Play Builder and BIG Lottery Capital Play Projects - The first year programme was completed in March 2010, 11 play areas have been built and improved. Due to the timescales involved and the grant conditions, year one sites were selected based on the Play Strategy audit and consultation, areas of identified need, geographical locations, maintenance cost, match funding opportunities, also sites where there were strong community groups and Friends of Parks involvement. These sites were approved at the Cabinet on 23rd April 2009 and subject to further consultation with the Play Partnership the proposed year 2 sites be considered as projects for year two (2010/2011).
- 8.10. Consultation was conducted by Play Rangers and Play Practitioners on all 11 play areas allocated for improvements. Children and young people have been involved in the decision making process - through local feeder primary schools, youth clubs, play centres, Play Day , Wirral Youth Conference and Stanley School.
- 8.11. The improvements of the year 1 play sites have proved to be successful. Children are playing out, engaging with the wider community and gaining independence and resilience which supports the development of healthy adults. This early intervention strategy has enabled children to have access to safe outdoor play space which supports the child obesity programme by improving and maintaining children's physical and mental health. The provision of local recreational play facilities also helps to tackle anti-social behaviour issues, whilst providing opportunities for developing social skills and learning.
- 8.12. In June 2010, the ring fence on play capital grants and the play revenue funding was withdrawn with immediate effect. The newly named Department for Education also removed any expectation on how many play facilities Councils were expected to deliver. A further announcement in July 2010 meant the year 2 programme was put on hold until further notice with the directive any new contractual liabilities were not to be incurred. The programme had to be suspended until the revised Play capital grant was confirmed and re-allocated.
- 8.13. At this stage, three play areas had been committed for improvements. These were Warwick Park where the contract had been awarded. Port Causeway and Whitfield Common, were also committed sites as these were predominately funded by the BIG Lottery Children's Play Fund. In addition to these sites expenditure had already been incurred on the purchase of play equipment in preparation for the year 2 programme.
- 8.14. In October, the Department for Education announced Wirral's revised allocation of £373,990.63 to cover expenditure already incurred, contractual commitments and as affordable, to support some other valued projects already identified in Wirral's year 2 programme.
- 8.15. Initial year 2 sites were finalised through further consultation and negotiation to ensure a strategic approach to the location of improved play areas with the Wirral Play Partnership across the Borough. However, a revised allocation of Play Builder capital grant means four play areas will receive major improvements as well as the 3 sites already committed. The remaining sites will have play equipment installed determined by the revised budget allocation and the priority ranking list, and the availability of other additional funding.

- 8.16. Leasowe Adventure Playground -The Observatory School continues to use the facility during the day between 1-3pm. The school use the sessions at the playground as a reward for good behaviour during the week. This has encouraged children and young people to attend after-school and at weekends.
- 8.17. Beechwood - Funding received from the local housing board was used to purchase a 'Kinect' motion system for the x-box plus sports and dance based software. This has enthralled all the children in the scheme and they have spent hours competing alongside each other in sport and dance activities. This is a unique and innovative way of involving all the children in healthy physical activity. Halloween, 'Mischief Night' was an organised community event. A specially designed interactive installation using recycled and scrap materials was constructed for the event and was attended by over 150 local residents, parents, children and young people. The annual Christmas Grotto was held in the community play and community centre. The large indoor grotto involves the support and contribution of many members of the community. Primarily, it is built by the play staff but ideas and construction materials are also generated from the local community. The children in the playscheme are also involved in some aspects of its construction. This culminates in a large community event, involving the estate residents and other agencies i.e. Community Police officers.
- 8.18. Charing Cross - A combined event with the Youth Club Music project is going from strength to strength children and young people thoroughly enjoy this and a noticeable improvement in playing ability. It also provides an opportunity for young people to learn how to get along together. A regular Saturday disco commenced from Saturday 6 October. Staff joined with the Community Police to take a group of children to the residential home of local senior citizens to sing Christmas carols and take part in festive activities. Older play scheme children have been involved in a youth club event with the local Co-Op orchestra who meet at Charing Cross to raise funds for the Haiti disaster appeal by helping with refreshments at a carol concert. An inclusive play session on Monday evenings continues to be promoted in conjunction with the Play For All lottery project.
- 8.19. Gautby Road organised a Christmas event, redecorating the art room into a winter wonder land with a full-size sleigh, constructed with wood by local parents. 70 children participated and received donated presents from Park Hampers.
- 8.20. Livingstone Street - Currently, staff are working with community support officers in the promotion of staying safe, i.e. going home after play sessions, stranger danger, road safety. Community Support Officers highlight dangers and emphasise their role with children. Cooking sessions have been delivered with children which promoted the benefits of healthy eating and awareness of a balanced diet.

9.0. **Training and Staff Development**

- 9.1. All three members of the team delivering the NVQ programme have been accepted for Voluntary Severance/Early Voluntary Retirement. Wirral Metropolitan College have been informed, and negotiations are in a place to find ways to ensure the current candidates can complete the programme.
- 9.2. Staff have received training to use the centralised departmental Capita ONE system which is planned to replace the aging DARTS system from 1 April 2011. There a few technical issues being attended to by Capita staff and the reports youth service require are in the process of being generated.
- 9.3. Youth & Play have become part of the Safeguarding Board's E-Safety team. Safe use of all electronic media is becoming a bigger issue in children and young people's lives. While youth and play equipment is generally well protected and monitored, this is not the case when children and young people are using their own equipment on their own and are more vulnerable.

- 9.4. FPM Management Development Programme - Although monitored by the extreme weather, the course continues. Feedback is again extremely positive. This course will be the last in the series as the programme is ending.
- 9.5. Child Protection - Staff have been approved to deliver the three hour programme, which is scheduled to take place in the spring.
- 10.0. Youth Participation**
- 10.1. The annual Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament took place on Tuesday 12 October. This year the conference theme was the Wirral's future corporate consultation and young people identified what they felt were priorities for provision of Council services in the future. A series of workshops were facilitated around the 4 Task Force areas and approximately 90 questionnaires were completed. 118 young people attended, with 21 schools being represented (including four special schools) and nine agencies/youth units.
- 10.2. The motion for the Youth Parliament was: "The Council has a duty to consult and involve its citizens in the decision making process. However, the system favours adults and we assert that elected members should be held as accountable to the young people of Wirral as they are to adults. Therefore we ask that the Council identifies mechanisms whereby young people will be informed of and involved in, decision making processes."
- 10.3. Prior to the debate, planning sessions with Councillors and young people took place, allowing for full understanding of Council procedures. 50 young people attended, representing nine schools and six agencies/youth units.
- 10.4. Following the success of the UK Youth Parliament debate in the House of Commons last year, MPs voted by a majority of 499 to 21, to allow the event to happen annually for the life of this Parliament. On Friday 29th October, elected Members of the UK Youth Parliament (MYPs) again sat on the green benches in the House of Commons and debated the issues that matter to young people from across the UK. Two Wirral UKYP representatives attended this event. During July and August young people from across the UK put forward a wide range of issues that they wanted to see and hear discussed and on the day young people debated issues including the cost of university, sex education in schools and the war in Afghanistan. The event created massive media interest - it was covered by the BBC through BBC News reports and debate footage being shown on BBC Parliament as well as many newspaper articles.
- 10.5. A full report of Youth Engagement activities in 2010 is attached separately.

11.0. Other Developments

- 11.1. Recently discussions have taken place with Onside, who developed the Bolton Lads and Girls Club model and who are developing similar provision in North West areas such as Warrington, Wigan and Cumbria. In October elected members had the opportunity to visit Bolton Lads and Girls Club and to discuss the model with key colleagues. A group has been formed to investigate the potential for developing a similar model in Birkenhead involving the voluntary, community, faith and private sectors. A report will be presented to Cabinet in January regarding this initiative.
- 11.2. Rampworx are continuing to identify funding streams to build an indoor skate park provision on land in Bidston which Cabinet has agreed be reserved for this development. Rampworx are working in close partnership with the local authority and are also key partners in the Birkenhead Onside initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the report.

Lindsay Davidson
Principal Manager, Youth & Play Service