

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION STRATEGY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD

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**1.0 Introduction**

The Positive Contribution Strategy Group has representation from Health, Wirral DAAT, The Voluntary Community and Faith Sector, Integrated Youth Support (Targeted and Universal) Community Safety, Children and Young People's Department (Children's Social Care), Enjoy and Achieve, Merseyside Fire & rescue and Involve North West. Meetings are held bi-monthly and the focus of these meetings is to monitor progress by group members in implementing the Positive Contribution section of the Children's Plan. The meetings also provide an opportunity the strategy group to identify emerging issues and discuss any impact on the work linked to the strategy group. An example of this was the increase of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System. Analysis of this increase identified that 26% of the increase was due to fare evasion by young people. Following this analysis, the Youth Offending service worked with the Transport police to secure agreement that young people involved in fare evasion should be triaged to identify a more appropriate intervention.

The work of the Outcome area is broad and ranges from formal interventions as undertaken by the Youth Offending Service to informal interventions such as helping young people to be involved in the decision making process at Pupil panels or at Youth Forum meetings. The work of the group is balanced between ensuring that targeted interventions enable vulnerable and at risk young people to move on to more universal developmental activities and maximise the opportunities presented by positive activities such as those funded by the Early Intervention Grant.

**2.0 Overview**

<p><b>Key recent achievements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people full members of the commissioning panel for Priority Area Three (Early Intervention Grant).</li> <li>• Young people have been reporting their successes on Teen Wirral and challenging the negative perspective of young people.</li> <li>• Young people set the priorities for the allocation of the Youth opportunity Fund.</li> <li>• The final 11 play areas were improved and completed as part of the Play Builder programme and average attendances at new play areas have increased.</li> <li>• Approximately 2156 children have participated in a range of positive play opportunities including Short Breaks for disabled children.</li> <li>• The new integrated management structure for Integrated Youth Support has resulted in the identification of new ways to promote prevention and early intervention.</li> <li>• The use of Triage by the Youth Offending Service is contributing to young people not entering the Youth Justice System.</li> <li>• More young people are being offered the opportunity to critically assess their consumption of alcohol.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key issues</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining the balance in the work of the strategy group between targeted statutory interventions and universal open access positive activities.</li> <li>• Identifying the specific outcomes for children and young people.</li> </ul>

<b>Key challenges ahead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining partnership working in a period of competing priorities.</li> <li>• Maintaining the balance in the work of the strategy group between targeted statutory interventions and universal open access positive activities.</li> <li>• Ensuring young people from both priority and non priority groups have opportunities to be effective in the decision making process.</li> <li>• Increased involvement by schools in the planning arrangements for the Youth Parliament in 2012</li> </ul>
<b>Risks to outcome delivery and proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressures on existing resources to meet competing priorities.</li> <li>• Proposed to work with the strategy group to ensure priorities are relevant and shared by partners and regularly review the work of the group.</li> <li>• Schools may not be able to be actively involved in the planning process.</li> <li>• Proposed action is to ensure that early deadlines are set and schools continue to be informed of arrangements for the Youth Parliament.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas requiring further partnership involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with schools to increase participation in Youth parliament.</li> <li>• Partners' response to the budget challenge. Are there areas where we can avoid duplication?</li> </ul>
<b>Equalities impact assessment areas for development and progress made</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress has been made in involving young people from minority groups in the decision making process. This has been made possible due to the increase by young people from minority groups in the commissioned activities. This is still an area for development and formalised in next year's plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas for promotion /publicity / communication / engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work of Wirral Involvement School's Council supported by Wired is enabling more young people with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties to take part in consultations and campaigns both nationally and locally.</li> </ul>

### 3.0 Areas for Reporting Focus

This year the work has included a focus on the development of the new Integrated Youth Support management structure which has been identified as the driver to ensure that young people receive timely and appropriate support. The structure is now in place and as a consequence, the deployment of staff has been reviewed to ensure there are no overlaps in provision. This is now improving outcomes for young people as the Positive Contribution Strategy Groups builds in the work of IYSS into its target setting.

The Early Intervention Grant provided young people with the opportunity to influence decision making. Three young people were **full members of the commissioning panel** for Priority Area Three, **Risk taking Behaviour in Children and Young People**. New providers were commissioned and a menu of support ranging from targeted interventions to universal developmental activities is now available for young people. Opportunities include targeted support through the Beacon Programme which is run by Merseyside Fire and Rescue to the open access arts programme whereby young people have been able to develop their interest and skill in dance, music or singing.

As part of addressing risk taking behaviour in young people, an Alcohol Intervention programme has been developed whereby 80 youth workers will be trained to provide young people with the opportunity to critically assess the implications of their alcohol use. This approach is innovative as

youth workers in universal settings will be able to help young people take positive action to address negative behaviour. Previously this work was seen as specialist and only deliverable in clinical settings.

## **4.0 Case studies**

Included are two case studies and quotes from young people who have been involved in a dance project. They reflect how services have been planned to address needs in young people and enable them to make a positive contribution. The examples are from Youth sports Night and Wirral youth theatre. They have been selected as they demonstrate how a planned approach will address individual needs and also show the breadth of the positive contribution agenda.

### *4.1 Case Study 'A'*

A is a 14 year old high school student who has been living on the Woodchurch Council Estate for many years. She has been attending Youth Sports Nights for a few months now and enjoys playing Basketball and Table tennis. A started attending the Youth Sports Night with one of her sisters, as she had no other real friends. A comes from a large family, with lots of siblings and who are on a low economic income and therefore can't afford the up to date clothes and trainers. Local peers bullied and ridiculed A as she has some cleanliness and hygiene problems and with very low confidence and self-esteem she was an easy target for them.

Youth Sports Nights are run for young people of the local area to enjoy and participate in sporting activities. They are free of charge and encourage local young people 13+ to engage in sports and activities with avenues for progression into sports clubs and associations. Youth Sports Activities Nights provide a comprehensive and excellent range of activities and are run across the local authority recreation centres and Community Centres throughout the borough.

A has recently become an integral and much needed part of Friday evening at the Woodchurch High School sports Centre working as a Young Volunteer. For the first few weeks A's attendance at the sessions was sporadic and she would not speak to anyone but her sisters. A also had limited interaction with her peers, both in and out of the session because she was also teased over her lack of cleanliness and personal hygiene this in turn affected her efforts to make friends.

It was noticed that A always liked to help staff when setting up equipment and dealing with functional problems, A was asked if she would like to become a young volunteer. A gladly accepted and has since been doing administrative work such as the registers, she also helps set up session and helps solve issues or problems that other young people may have within the session by talking and reassuring them. A also has become someone for her peers to speak to; they see her as someone who now has some power to make decisions, and has increased confidence.

On speaking to other young people, it has come to light that she is slowly being accepted as a trusted, helpful and approachable peer and is gradually gaining the trust and respect of other young people on the Woodchurch Estate. A has said that people are asking her during the week in school and in the street what sport we will be doing this week in the youth sports nights, and she said she replies to them 'We'll tell ya on Friday when we have made our decision!' She has said that "It's funny when they ask me what we are going to do on Friday". This has empowered A and has given her the self-assurance to answer her peers confidently.

A was delighted when she was approached and asked to become a young volunteer and wants to gain her sporting qualifications with Community Sports Development and become a qualified Sports Coach. I believe being a Young Volunteer has done wonders for A's confidence, self-esteem and more importantly her self belief!

*S Aldridge – Woodchurch Coordinator.  
Community Sports Development.*

## 4.2 Wirral Youth Theatre (WYT) case study

A young man has recently joined the drama and improvisation sessions at Pilgrim Street Arts Centre. This is after being involved in a taster session at the Multicultural Centre. WYT has delivered several EIG arts tasters at the centre and the young man who attended a drama taster session expressed an interest in developing his skills and was signposted to the two sessions that he might be interested in.

He now travels in from Eastham regularly to attend both sessions and has shown himself to have skills in both improvisation and physical theatre which are both new experiences for him. He is focused and committed to both these sessions and from being quite shy and withdrawn, he now appears to be really comfortable working with both groups and is looking forward to performing in the Claire House Halloween Walk and an improvisation performance as part of the YOUTH ARTS EXPO week in November.

### Young Men's Quotes from evaluations of the 'MACHISMO RELOADED'

<i>'I learnt that if you need to get a dance job you have to do different dance styles'</i>	<i>'I think its good, as it stops us misbehaving'</i>	<i>'I can do whatever I want if I try'</i>	<i>'I think this is a big opportunity because people can earn lots of money from dance'</i>
<i>'Makes me want to meet more male dancers'</i>	<i>'I think it was great because some people don't know how good young people are'</i>	<i>'I think this is important because there are not many dance opportunities for boys only'</i>	<i>'It was great because there were two men that were the teachers'</i>
<i>'I think it was great because I could bring out my inner self'</i>	<i>'Being able to express yourself through dance'</i>	<i>'Its great for getting us off the streets'</i>	<i>'It's different to most dance events because it brings different abilities together and we meet new people'</i>

## 5.0 Brief SWOT Analysis of the Outcome Area

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multi-agency approaches to enabling young people to have better outcomes.</li> <li>2. Different needs of young people are represented in strategy group.</li> <li>3. Engagement agenda is shared across partners.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not always able to have tangible outcomes</li> <li>2. Not all groups are represented in strategy group.</li> </ol>
<b>Opportunities:</b>	<b>Threats:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish shared priorities to maximise opportunities for children and young people.</li> <li>2. Focus on the rationale for targeted and universal activities</li> <li>3. Understanding of other partner's constraints.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budget pressures across the partnership will reduce resource available.</li> <li>2. Capacity of partners involved to deliver against the expectations of partners.</li> <li>3. Positive Contribution is not a statutory duty and can be vulnerable to change in priorities.</li> </ol>

## **6.0 Summary**

This year the focus on structural changes as in Integrated Youth Support will form the basis of evidenced and improved outcomes for young people. There is a shared understanding of the need to balance the targeted and universal opportunities and the contribution both make to helping young people make a positive contribution. Young people are becoming more involved in decision making as in the commissioning panel for the Early Intervention grant. There is still scope for improvement in the Youth Parliament and the opportunity it presents for young people to effectively engage in the decision making process. With such a broad agenda the challenge for next year is to ensure that set targets are relevant to all partners and identified work areas are achievable and impact is demonstrated.

## **7.0 Recommendations:**

That Wirral Children's Trust note the Report

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**Appendices:** None