

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

12 APRIL 2012

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                      | <b>WIRRAL POSITIVE FUTURES PROJECT</b>                    |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>              | <b>ALL</b>  |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>                    | <b>DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES</b>                     |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b> | <b>CLLR. LESLEY RENNIE, CULTURE TOURISM &amp; LEISURE</b> |
| <b>KEY DECISION?</b>                 | NO  |

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update of the work of the Wirral's Sports Development Unit and in particular the Positive Futures Project and to seek Cabinet endorsement for the proposed activity for 2012/13 as agreed in the Council budget for 2012/13.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Wirral Positive Futures Project is managed by the Sports Development Unit. The project started in 2005 and has grown in reputation since that time. The project seeks to make positive changes in the lives of vulnerable young people, especially those caught up in drugs, alcohol and substance misuse. The project is funded by the Home Office with additional support from Wirral Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT). From 2013/14 Wirral Positive Futures like all projects across the country, will seek financial support through the Police Commissioning process. Now is an important time to maintain and build upon those relationships to cement future delivery. Central to the success of this project has been its key worker Colin Hunt MBE.
- 2.2 The project has grown significantly since 2005, both in terms of young people engaged and with the demand for project delivery. Previously additional funding has been specifically for activity, not for staff to develop the schemes. Most recently Positive Futures has been working in partnership to deliver the Enhanced Outreach Project, a mobile sports provision consisting of a small mini bus, containing sports equipment and a lighting rig. This is a good project but success has been restricted by reliance on older vehicles and equipment. These limiting issues could be resolved with the allocated funding of £50,000.
- 2.3 Positive Futures receives annual funding of £40,000 from the Home Office to cover the salary of the Activity Mentor - Colin Hunt, plus a small amount

of activity delivery. Positive Futures is also currently commissioned to deliver the Enhanced Outreach Project in partnership with the Youth Service to June 2012, and a small amount of holiday provision. Funding from Wirral DAAT is yet to be confirmed. This is subject to a Wirral Council commissioning process

- 2.4 An additional £50,000 was allocated for the Positive Futures project in the 2012/13 revenue budget approved by Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012 (Minute 131 refers). This most welcome additional funding will undoubtedly enhance the “offer” to the most needy people and improve their life chances as endorsed by the following two case studies.

### **3.0 CASE STUDIES**

- 3.1 The following two case studies are to illustrate the work done by the Positive Futures project:

#### **3.2 Case study 1**

Person D first approached a youth sports co-ordinator in Summer 2009 at Wirral Sports and Tennis Centre, Bidston, which is the venue for a Positive Futures session held every Friday night. He had been watching the football session from the side lines for a number of weeks and finally ‘plucked’ up the courage to ask how he could become involved in helping run the session. Person D was temporarily not in employment, education or training (NEET) and following the appropriate clearance, he started coaching as a volunteer in August 2009. The lads who attend the football are sometimes hard to engage and particularly when in a group are quite intimidating and although Person D was nervous he challenged their behaviour and set about laying out acceptable behaviour ground rules. He soon gained a rapport with the group through attending every Friday night and has gone on to continually display a great deal of enthusiasm even when faced with challenging situations.

Person D has continued to attend the session in a supporting role e.g. recording attendances of young people, organising groups into teams, recording scores and refereeing. Person D was instrumental in the planning and delivery of the Northwest Positive Futures football tournament. All of his volunteer sessions have been recorded, which currently shows 67 hours using the V inspired award log-book. (V inspired is a national youth volunteering program).

Person D says “I have been very impressed working for Positive Futures and have personally gained an awful lot, I feel I have got a lot more confident in myself and I am enjoying being part of the Positive Futures team and helping the kids achieve things is a great feeling. I have enjoyed getting to know the Sports Co-ordinators and learning from them has been life-changing for me. I believe that Positive Futures gives the kids something to look forward to and helps them stay out of trouble. I have also gained my Football Association (FA) level 1 and my National Pool Lifeguard

qualification and I am very interested in doing more qualifications, I really want to do my FA level 2.”

### **3.3 Case study 2**

*Extract from a letter received by the Sports Development Unit*

I am a 41 year old mother of 4 ages F 26, C 18, J 15 and a 4 year old. We have lived on the Wirral my whole life and for the past 15+ years I have resided in Seacombe. Over the years I have noticed the decline in the area and as my children have hit teenage years I was constantly aware of the growing drug problem in our area. I think a lot of the trouble in our streets stems from boredom, and youngsters possibly looking for ways in which they can entertain themselves sadly turn to drugs, smoking, drinking and increasingly so, violence.

All my children are very sports minded and all absolutely love football. So when the soccer dome opened on Friday nights for free it was such a great relief to me, as it is the weekend when our children are most at risk of making bad decisions. Being a student I have very limited funds to pay for them to go to different sports activities.

I have more concerns over J than C and F. He was starting to get into the wrong crowd etc, but then both C and J started to liaise with Positive Futures who I honestly cannot thank enough. After going on several trips and participating in several sporting activities J has grown as a person and has found respect for both himself and others. He wants to join the army when he leaves school. The opportunities that J has been given has helped him to get fit enough to be accepted into army training centre. Only last week his schoolteacher phones me to say what a change there has been in him. “He is coming into school and on time, completing work, and is a lovely individual to teach”. I can tell you this is a far cry from two years ago. Credit has to go to J but the catalyst in his turn around has undoubtedly been Positive Futures, and the Wirral ASBO Team. Through positive futures J has been able to do things he has only ever dreamt of and he has surpassed himself in some of the more challenging activities he has done.

As for C, Positive Futures had been fantastic especially Colin Hunt and Alf (Community ASBO Officer) who has given C some fantastic opportunities. C has done a lot of voluntary work for both the council and Positive Futures and has recently been awarded the RESPECT AWARD. C too has also been able to participate in numerous sporting activities, ranging from football, golf, hill walking, abseiling, canoeing, skiing plus many more. She has also been on a few courses making her more employable; C played in an All Stars tournament earlier this year through Positive Futures and had a great time there and she has been short listed to represent them in a tournament and she is off to London and Switzerland next month, none of which would have been possible without Positive Futures and the ASBO team. The staff are always on hand to support the young people in whatever way they can, providing both emotional and practical support.

I realise funding is hard to find in this current climate, but mine is just one family from the area and you can see what an impact it has had on us.

Positive Futures offer young people the opportunity to do things that their parents could never afford them to do, making them feel good about themselves and also about living a healthy lifestyle. They are taught all about respect and if you give it you will be rewarded for it. Most of the service users treat it well but there is always one or two who are harder to reach out to but I do believe that we can help to promote change for the better if we were given the opportunity to do so.

Since writing this letter C has gone on to be picked to be one of the 8 All Stars for 'Your Game' BBC. I am sure you are well aware of what the prospect or the potential that can come about from this amazing chance and privilege. Not only for Positive Futures, one of your own prodigies' so to speak but for C this could open up so many doors for her. C has some fantastic ideas about the projects she would like to set up, even charities with the help of YOUR GAME and POSITIVE FUTURES I am sure this will be achieved. I am actually quite excited for the future and where all this is going to lead for C and all the other youngsters and young adults she wants to reach out to.

As you can see I am a great fan of Positive Futures and I truly am eternally grateful for the opportunities they have given my children.

#### **4.0 PROPOSED FUTURE EXPENDITURE (2012/13)**

4.1 The following activity is proposed for the additional allocation of £50,000 approved by Council for 2012/13 which will enable the project to extend its work:

- Purchase of a transit van complete with telescopic lighting capabilities and generator to floodlight an area of land in the evening allowing organised sports to take place. The mobile sports unit would operate in Parks and multiuse games areas in the evenings at weekends to engage young people. **Cost £20,000**
- Employment of a Positive Futures Assistant Activity Mentor to work alongside Colin Hunt, full time to develop and enhance targeted sports activities and increase volunteering and coaching opportunities for vulnerable young people. The post would be for one year predominantly in the evenings and at weekends in areas of most need. **Cost £22,000**
- Training budget for up to 40 targeted young people enabling them to qualify as sports instructors and be ready for employment on Sports Development and other Sports & Recreation schemes. **Cost £8,000.**

#### **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

5.1 There are risks to the future long term funding of this project.

## **6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

6.1 The additional funding could be used to further increase staffing rather than equipment or could be used to provide additional facilities. The proposed combination of equipment and staffing is considered to be the most cost effective for the project at the present time.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 No specific consultation has been undertaken on the proposals.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

8.1 The project has a high level of commitment and voluntary engagement.

## **9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

9.1 The proposed additional expenditure for 2012/13 of £50,000 has been approved in the Council budget for 2012/13.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review is attached – <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/technical-services-0>.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 *(Carbon usage implications? Any other relevant environmental issues?)*

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no planning implications. The project has a proven record in improving community safety.

## **14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Note the work of Wirral's Sports Development Unit and in particular the Positive Futures Project;
- (2) Endorse the proposed activity for 2012/13 outlined in Section 4.0.

## **15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

15.1 To agree the expenditure additional funding allocated to the Positive Futures Project for 2012/13.

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**APPENDICES**

*None*

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

*None*

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|
| <b>None</b>            |             |