

WIRRAL COUNCIL

YOUTH AND PLAY SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 8 OCTOBER 2013

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SENIOR LOCALITY MANAGER - YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0. **General Service Update/Staff Movements**

Following the success of the GIRLS Project the Service have been successful in securing funding from Public Health for 3 new projects to be delivered over a 18 month period.

Area Team reports

2.0. **Birkenhead Districts and South Wirral**

Birkenhead District

- 2.1. Young people from Birkenhead Youth Hub have been involved in a variety of activities which have been delivered by the workers and other partner agencies, for e.g. Brook, Fire Service, Youth Federation, Involve North West and JM Sports. The Urban Garden project is going strong and all the young people involved gained an awareness of how things grow and how much hard work is required, which leaves them with real sense of achievement. Employment skills sessions, which are being delivered each week, are covering: CV writing, research skills and interview/presentation preparation that is essential for career opportunity. Drug awareness training has been delivered to the young people looking at legal highs. The session was well received by the young people and their contribution to the session was positive. Attendance remains high on regular sports activities.
- 2.2. Birkenhead Youth Outreach Team works in partnership with Sports Development, Police, Response and Brook to deliver regular Friday and Saturday diversionary activities. The Kontaktabus enables group work to take place, delivering brief interventions and workshops, covering key areas such as alcohol and drug awareness, relationships, sexual health and rights and responsibilities promoting positive citizenship. Birkenhead District Youth Forum was held at the Birkenhead Youth Hub. Young people had the opportunity to express their views raising issues such as policing and the development of a new Police Youth Liaison Group. Young people were also updated on the development of the proposed Youth Zone. Over 100 young people attended the annual Sand Sculpture Competition on New Brighton Beach. The event was supported by the Deputy Mayor.
- 2.3. Charing Cross Youth Club offer various activities for the young people attending the unit, e.g. arts and crafts where they have the opportunity to participate in painting and decorating, air hockey, and BBQs. MENCAP have delivered a Life Skills project looking at managing money and relationships. Young people who take part will gain recognised accreditation. Other courses from MENCAP will be introduced in the coming months.

South Wirral District

- 2.4. South Wirral Youth Hub is open from Tuesday to Saturday, 7pm -10pm. On average 30 young people attend on a nightly basis. Young people have been involved in redesigning the layout inside the building. They have been focussing on what is on offer, do they feel welcomed and what information and advice is available. In preparation for the single Gateway staff are working with young people to promote this new service. The Hub is in the process of setting up a buddy system which will encourage new and existing members to feel welcomed. The Hub is also running a Virtual Babies accredited course and establishing a Members Committee where young people will have the opportunity to have a say in the running of their Hub and wider issues within their community.
- 2.5. South Wirral Youth Outreach Team have been engaging with hard to reach and vulnerable young people who have been reported as engaging in risk taking behaviour. Through youth work interventions young people accessed informal workshops around the issues that affect them. These included alcohol, smoking and drug quizzes. The team also use visual aids and discussions around their understanding of the law and the consequences of not following it. The team will promote and signpost young people towards positive activities in the locality.
- 2.6. Bebington Youth Club operate Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7pm to 10pm. Young people from the youth club have been involved in an environmental clean up of the clubs' outside spaces. This has involved picking up litter and cutting back bushes and weeding. Young people have participated in workshops on alcohol awareness, personal safety and healthy eating. The unit is in the process of changing the use of the snooker room to a multi functioning media suite, which will provide young people with the opportunity to explore new skills in music and production.

Wallasey and West Wirral Districts

Wallasey District

- 2.7. Wallasey Youth Hub played a significant part in the delivery of the successful G.I.R.L.S. project. Six young women from the Hub attended the programme and as a result are now regular attendees. A parallel, young men's project, which is working with a small group of vulnerable males has been a valuable spin off. The Youth Hub has also recently been host to a Community Fire Day and "Geared and Go" a council backed project aimed at delivering road safety education to young bikers.
- 2.8. Wallasey Youth Outreach Team are responsible for a plot at a local community allotment enabling young people to grow their own crops which in the future could be used to support healthy eating projects. The Young Reporters group report on a number of stories in the local community. 7 Waves Radio have offered training for young people to design, produce and present their stories on the radio station. In partnership with the Council Press Office, the young reporters are looking at having a regular feature in the Wirral News.
- 2.9. Moreton Youth Club opens on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening and delivers a wide programme of activities for young people. Following a staffing reorganisation, the Principal Youth Worker and her staff are consulting young people on a menu of opportunities that will fit their needs. Currently a range of sporting

activities are being delivered by the Sports Development Unit and other opportunities are being developed in conjunction with the National Citizenship Scheme. The club is keen to develop its capacity to deliver activities whereby young people can gain accreditation and recognition.

West Wirral District

- 2.10. Young people from West Wirral Youth Hub have taken part in various projects, some of these include, photography project, table tennis league and creative media/marketing. 14 Young people have been awarded the ASDAN short course accreditation in Physical Recreation through participating in the Tuesday Night Football. The Youth Hub runs a Duke of Edinburgh's Award session. They have young people involved in Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. All of whom are on course to complete all sections and the expeditions involved. The Hub has 8 young people who are volunteering as part of their DofE through their school; their responsibilities are to run the refreshment bar and to plan future events.
- 2.11. West Wirral Youth Outreach Team operates 5 evenings a week, Monday to Saturday using the Kontaktabus. They target young people who are at risk of being involved in antisocial behaviour. They work closely with the partner agencies within West Wirral to provide a positive youth offer for young people to be involved in. The team support the Multi Sports night on a Friday evening at Pensby High School. This is in partnership with Sports Development, Police and the Hope Centre.
- 2.12. Young people from Fender Youth Club have been involved in sexual health workshops. These are gender specific promoting sexual health and safe condom use. There is an on going programme encouraging young people to think healthy, broadening their culinary skills and tastes. The programme looks at reducing the amount of fat and sugar young people consume. Young people have also taken part in alcohol awareness sessions to highlight dangers of excessive drinking and keeping safe.

3.0. Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts (WYT) – Pilgrim Street Arts Centre

- 3.1. Wirral Youth Theatre's Creative Development Team continues to offer a wide range of arts based activities and specific provision for targeted groups of young people including young people with disabilities, young people who are looked after, young carers and young people who are affected by mental illness in their families. This work takes place at Pilgrim Street Centre and across Wirral in schools, community and youth settings. The majority of this work is commissioned by the Early Intervention Grant, Health, Sports Development and Schools.
- 3.2. At the end of last year, three WYT young people were involved in presentations for the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) 2013/14 commissioning process. The application was successful and WYT was awarded over £100,000 to undertake specific work with young people with disabilities from 8 – 18 years, as well as delivering 9, 12 week intensive programmes in Birkenhead/ Tranmere, Leasowe/Moreton East, Seacombe, Bidston/St James and Rock Ferry as part of the Universal Youth Challenge Programme. These programmes have now started with an extensive centrally based multi media programme based at Pilgrim Street and several outreach projects including, taster arts activity sessions in Beechwood and Gautby Road playschemes targeting the eleven plus age group. Visual arts activities are taking place with the

Woman's Enterprise Breakthrough (WEB) in Bidston, dance sessions in Beechwood Leisure centre and Bidston Tennis Centre, extra curricular dance sessions in Weatherhead, Mosslands and Foxfield Schools and dance and drama workshops for the Charlotte Brightside project in New Brighton.

- 3.3. During the summer WYT delivered dance and visual arts summer schools. 11 young people who are looked after attended the visual arts programme alongside the established visual arts group. The sessions included animation, portraiture and sculpture and all 17 young people achieved an Open Awards unit at Entry Level 3.
- 3.4. Every young person who is involved in EIG projects will undertake an Open College entry level unit and achieve accreditation for their participation in arts activities. 100 young people are registered to date. WYT will also be offering intensive personal development courses which introduce young people to the concept of peer education. In June, 10 young people who are looked after attended a 2 day training course entitled 'Introduction to Peer Ed' and successfully completed the accreditation.
- 3.5. The EIG funding received for Creative Activities for disabled children and young people currently funds three targeted weekly sessions which are the 'Wednesday Wonders' drama workshops for disabled children and their siblings which is supported by a team of young peer educators, 'LIKEWISE' dance workshops and 'LIKE U' peer education dance company. All projects build confidence and self esteem, develop peer education and volunteering skills and enable successful integration into the mainstream activities and promote inclusive practice within all WYT activities.
- 3.6. WYT continues to facilitate the 'Kidstime' project which is funded by the NHS and run in partnership with child and adult mental health services. 'Kidstime' provides monthly workshops for families affected by mental illness and now has 12 families attending regularly. Each session looks at a theme related to mental health and the adult mental health team facilitate a separate session with the parents. The session culminates in a sharing of the learning around the theme. Several of the young people are now attending the in-house activities at Pilgrim Street.
- 3.7. During the summer term the dance team worked with years 7 and 8 as part of their extra curricular activities. WYT also delivered dance and singing workshops in eight schools as part of the Summer Sissler Project which culminated in a performance at Weatherhead School. The team of staff and peer educators also worked with 260 pupils at the Schools Olympics Event in June.
- 3.8. Contembreak Young Men's Dance Group performed at the Floral Pavilion Theatre as part of the YOUTH HERO AWARDS. WYT also nominated a young woman who won the Community Hero for services to young people with disabilities.
- 3.9. The Like U Dance company which is an innovative peer education project for young people with disabilities performed in LIVERPOOL as part of the DADA festival at JMU. They created their own piece based on how they feel that society views disability and received extremely positive feedback.
- 3.10. Pacific Swing vocal ensemble continue to be in great demand and have regularly performed gigs over the summer at a variety of locations including Parr Street Studios. They have also made a film of their performances which will be used as a promotional tool.

- 3.11. Last Minute Theatre Company is currently busy devising new pieces of work to deliver to young people across Wirral. These include a piece for the Anti-Bullying Strategy Launch in October, which will explore the different types of bullying. They are also adapting extracts of 'If you Loved me you would', for the Youth Voice Conference in October and will help support facilitation of workshops around the themes of respect and relationship abuse.
- 3.12. Members of the company have also supported two training courses for GPs (commissioned by the North West Society of GPs) and trainee GPs (delivered at Royal Preston Hospital) .The company deliver a short theatre piece which explores the blocks and barriers young people face when accessing services and health professionals about sexual health. They then facilitate a workshop which explores these issues further. WYT have been invited to deliver 3 workshops at a conference for Health Professionals in the North West, in September, where over 75 health professionals will be attending.

4.0. **Health Services in Schools (HSIS)**

- 4.1. The HSIS team have developed a Developmental group work resource pack on Drug/Alcohol including Smoking, Happiness/Emotional Well-Being and Sexual Health/Relationships which are being piloted in the Wirral Secondary schools the HSIS Youth Workers are currently working in. Each pack consists of, six session plans based on the subject, a young person friendly confidentiality statement and a distance travelled outcome framework measuring the young person's knowledge and personal journey before and after they have taken part.

5.0. **Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

- 5.1. In November 22 young people from Wirral will travel to London to receive their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Awards at St. James's from H.R.H. The Earl of Wessex. For these young people, this achievement represents the culmination of several years of personal development, volunteering and endurance.
- 5.2. The Youth Support Service continues to hold the authority's DofE operating licence and offers support and guidance to 32 establishments across the borough. The Principal Youth Worker (DofE Support) is now engaged in developing the Award in the Youth Hubs. Initial reports indicate a healthy interest, with several young people from all four Hubs signing up to do their Bronze Award.

6.0. **Training and Staff Development**

- 6.1. Training available to the workforce has been around the changes within the Service and the Local Authority. The Gateway training for the Team Leaders has taken place to give them a clear understanding of how the process works and for them to cascade to their teams. 'Roles and Responsibilities' training has been delivered as it is important that all staff are clear of what their role is and how they fit within the new restructure. KIE training 'Refresh and Inspire' has been well received and attended. Outcome training has been delivered to all Team Leaders as one of the biggest challenges within Youth Work is recording in a robust and effective way the work which takes place.

7.0. Participation

- 7.1. Work is currently underway to set up a new 'Youth Voice Group' which will act as an overarching mechanism for young people's engagement and participation. The aim will be to bring together young people from the range of participation groups that exist in Wirral including representatives from Youth Hub 'members' groups, Children in Care. Council and District Youth Forums. Other young people will be recruited at the annual Youth Voice Conference, Youth Parliament and from WYT, Peer Educators and the Young Reporters. In addition, there are a number of other groups operating with school and the community, voluntary and faith sectors who may also be interested in participation.
- 7.2. The Youth Voice Group will offer young people the opportunity to develop skills in debating, citizenship, political education, peer education and conference planning. The group will be involved in major consultations including the Youth Zone development and the Children and Young People's plan. Other opportunities will include taking part in CYPD interview panels and becoming Youth Support Young Inspectors. The plan is also to enable young people to gain accreditation for their involvement.
- 7.3. In July, Team Leaders and a team of Peer Educators from the Wirral Youth Theatre (WYT) undertook a consultation process to inform the theme and focus of the next Youth Voice Conference in October and to raise awareness of the new Youth Voice Group. Over 80 young people gave their feedback and ideas for the issues to be covered at the event. This has helped to shape the style and content of the Youth Voice Conference in October which will have an overall theme of Respect. The workshops will be designed and co-facilitated by young people and the day will include issue based performances by WYT as a stimulus for discussion.

8.0. Play Service

Beechwood

- 8.1. Beechwood Playscheme has over 150 children registered and continues to attract an average of over 30 children each session.
- 8.2. During the summer, children participated in a wide range of diverse activities, supported by experienced Play workers. These included den building, learning to cook on an open fire, sports, as well as active outdoor games which increased children's participation in physical activity.
- 8.3. Children designed and built a Laser Quest area, using cardboard boxes and free scrounge material. They also enjoyed percussion workshops with a range of homemade instruments combined with real instruments loaned from Wirral Play Council. A themed week of outdoor water play was appreciated in the hot weather, children participated in water slides, water 'pirate' battles and cooled off in the paddling pool.
- 8.4. Fund raising efforts by the staff with support from the local community, police and housing association, ensured the planning and delivery of three off site trips.

- 8.5. A group of 20 children visited the BBC studios in Salford to participate in a children's television show called 'The Slammer'. It was a fantastic opportunity enabling the children to experience how a television programme is produced and they participate in the process from start to finish. The programme will be aired later in the year.
- 8.6. The younger children visited Greenacres Farm. They enjoyed feeding the animals at close quarters, riding on a tractor and learning more about farming.
- 8.7. The final trip of the summer was a large scale community day out in Flamingo Land theme park in Yorkshire. This was joint venture between the staff, local Police and the community. The aims of the day were to encourage families to spend time together, foster community/police relationships and provide a great day out at a reduced cost. Over 60 people attended including Play staff and four local police community support officers.
- 8.8. A playscheme reunion was held after the summer, this offered the chance for former playscheme members to get together and reminisce on the past 30 years of Play in the community. It provided the opportunity to celebrate past achievements, and establish support from parents and community members.

Gautby Road

- 8.9. Following consultation with the children, a number of off site activities were organised during the summer, subsidised through fund raising and small grants.
In August, over 90 children and parents participated in trips to Knowsley Safari Park and Blackpool. The children learnt about different species of animals and also enjoyed the sea lion show at the Safari Park. Blackpool was a great family day out for the community, and it was rewarding watching children conquer their fears by participating in new activities.
- 8.10. At the end of August, 15 children participated in a residential weekend to Boreatton Park, Shropshire. For some children, it was their first experience of adventurous outdoor activities. During the weekend, children joined in the Giant Swing and Challenge Course and worked together and helped encourage each other to overcome their fears.
- 8.11. The zip wire was challenging for some of children, not only because of the height, but also as they had to go over a lake. Eventually, with support and encouragement from their peers, they all conquered the zip-wire. There were also opportunities to canoe in a stream, abseiling and tackle the high ropes course. During weekend, each overcame their own individual challenges and it was an invaluable learning experience for all of them, helping to increase their confidence and self-esteem. The children, with support from the Play workers, are producing a DVD of the weekend to be shown to the parents at a celebration evening.

Livingstone Street

- 8.12. Children participated in making pitta bread pizzas and fruit smoothies as part of a healthy eating awareness session. They prepared and designed their own pizzas and smoothies incorporating three different types of vegetables. They also discussed the importance of a healthy well balanced diet and benefits of eating fruit and vegetables.

- 8.13. During the summer, the children participated in a variety of activities, which were chosen and planned by themselves. Playground and traditional street games were organised and the children played with minimal equipment, emphasising group cooperation and imagination. This culminated in a two hour game of hopscotch which the children updated to involve more children, using only a single piece of chalk. They actively encouraged the children to work together in teams and support each other.
- 8.14. A donation of arts and crafts kits from a local retail company enabled the children to make pirate ships, photo frames, ballerinas and jewellery boxes. The children also organised their own talent show which was held at the celebration event on the last day of the summer.

Charing Cross

- 8.15. A Civic Award presentation evening is planned to celebrate the achievements of the children and young people who have attained their awards. Currently, 33 children are registered on the Fender Award and 24 children have completed the award. The children have participated in a number of activities linked to the Civic Award, including, visits to the fire station, baking, healthy eating sessions, candle making and a road safety project.
- 8.16. The summer programme was based around the elements, earth, wind, fire and water. Children participated in activities which provided experience of these elements, including, kite making, den building, water slides, planting and cooking.
- 8.17. The personal safety project continues to have an impact, organised as a joint venture with the youth club. Children learn how to protect themselves from potential risk and harm. Support is given to the older play scheme children who are moving up to the youth club. Their increased independence means they need to be aware how to keep themselves safe in the local community. Children and young people are encouraged to travel in pairs or small groups and keep their valuables hidden from view.

Leasowe Adventure Playground

- 8.18. Leasowe Adventure Playground organised a successful trip to Chester Zoo for 32 children aged 5 – 12 years. External funding from the Leasowe Estate Tenants Association enabled all the children to go on a boat ride and the monorail at the zoo.
- 8.19. During the summer the scheme increased its numbers and attracted other children from outside the Leasowe catchment area. Local community fund raising provided a celebration event at the end of each week for up to 80 children. Parents valued the free play opportunities provided for their children, especially in these times of financial constraint.
- 8.20. The outdoor play area improvements were completed. A new inclusive see saw and surface area for the space net has replenished with new play sand. Two large mobile trolleys of inclusive soft play equipment have been purchased through a grant from Aiming High for Disabled children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the report.

Lindsay Davidson
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