

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 15TH OCTOBER 2009

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

INTEGRATED YOUTH SUPPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents Cabinet with an overview of our services to support young people outside the school setting.

Integrated Youth Support comprises two main elements:

1. **Universal Youth Support** covers those services available to all young people regardless of any additional need. It includes, for example, youth clubs, Duke of Edinburgh Award and Wirral Youth Theatre. My earlier report concerning the commissioning of super-centres and satellites related to universal youth support.
2. **Targeted Youth Support** covers services designed to support vulnerable young people and the communities in which they live by targeted interventions. This includes the work of the Youth Offending Service and Outreach and Response services. Many of these services are currently located in the Children and Young People's Department but some are not.

This report touches on aspects of both elements but particularly focuses on targeted work. It makes structural recommendations to make sure that services are integrated and well co-ordinated in the future.

The report provides :

A response to the Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review (11th November 2008).
An update on the wider changes in National Youth Policy,
An account of the response to the competitive dialogue process for the commissioning of Connexions services,

The report recommends structural changes to the Children and Young Peoples Department (CYPD) and the Department for Regeneration in response to these changes. Specifically, it proposes to bring together in the Participation and Inclusion Branch of the Children and Young People's Department,

- **The Youth Offending Service (YOS)**, currently free standing,
- **The Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team**, currently part of the Joint Community Safety Team in the Regeneration Department,
- Responsibility for managing the new contract for the provision of **Connexions services**,

These services will then be under the same management as the Youth Service, Young Peoples' Engagement and Wirral Alternative Schools Programme (WASP). It is recommended that a post of Strategic Service Manager be established to lead and co-ordinate this growing and important area of work. It would be funded from the part of the

Area Based Grant ear-marked for Connexions service management —See Cabinet Report 15 October ‘Connexions Services Contract’.

1.0 Background

1.1 Local Considerations

Previously Cabinet has received a report, “Reconfiguration of Youth Service Provision” (27th November 2009) setting out the steps to be taken to improve universal youth provision further by the commissioning of four hubs. Following a commissioning process initiated in June 2009, the outcome of this process was reported to Cabinet on the 24th September, 2009.

This report builds on these universal developments identifying areas in the area of targeted and specialist youth support services. This will ensure greater coherence in relation to the most vulnerable young people and those whose actions have a negative impact on their communities. The report responds to the key areas for development as identified in the Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review conducted in 2008 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 Overview and Scrutiny Report into Youth Outreach

The Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the scope for the review of Youth Outreach in October 2007. The main issues for the review were identified as :

- Is the workforce adequately protected?
- Is the existing Youth Outreach organisation reaching the right young people?
- What do the young people want?
- What partnerships / funding are in existence and can they be improved?

It was agreed that the scope should include the out reach work provided by the Youth Service Outreach Team , the Specialist Response team and the Youth Respect Team (which is part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team within the Community Safety Team of Regeneration Department).

The report was well received and has made a valuable contribution to shaping the future agenda in particular in the development of four hubs as reported to Cabinet (Reconfiguration of Youth Service Provision, 27 November 2009).

1.3 Members involved in the scrutiny of this area made the following comments:

“The panel recognises the skill and dedication of the outreach workers who engage so effectively with many young people. Indeed, for the future, the Panel would wish to see the service given an even higher profile. The Panel has a vision for an outreach service which will be provided by a modern, proactive outreach team which can address the current challenges such as the drinking culture, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour prevalent among some young people. It is suggested that the team would work most effectively if there was a single line of management or if the co-ordination of activities provided by the different teams was improved.

1.4 In addition the panel made 30 recommendations, these included :-

- The authority should consider a re-structuring of the outreach service, the aim of which should be to provide a “hub” or key point-of contact for young people in

several districts of the borough. Each “hub” will provide the focus point from which the outreach team will operate.

- The Council should re-organise the Youth Outreach team, in order to provide a sharper focus for the service provision and reduce duplication which currently exists among the various outreach teams.
- The Cabinet is strongly urged to support the merging of the Youth Respect Team (within Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team) into the Youth Outreach Team within the Youth Service (Children’s Services Department). This proposal will result in better use of resources (both financial and facilities,), will avoid duplication of work and will enhance team-working and information sharing.
- The Youth Service is encouraged to explore ways in which more diversionary activities can be developed in a flexible manner that can meet the aspirations of young people in terms of content, time and location. Such activities might involve any of the following:
 - ◆ current facilities opening for more evenings
 - ◆ an enhanced use for Kontacta Bus to involve activities for young people such as computer games; music facilities; tuck shop (in addition to the current educational / advice role).
 - ◆ themed evenings for young people to involve football sessions, bowling, dance evenings.

A number of the recommendations of this report have been responded to in the move to create a different pattern of youth club provision across Wirral with the creation of “a hub or key point of contact for young people in several districts of the borough (recommendation 1)”. This report responds to the other major recommendations made.

1.5 National Youth Policy Considerations

In making recommendations for modifying the management arrangements for Integrated Youth Support (IYS) account has also been taken of national policy and the requirement to deliver a number of PSA targets.

The overarching policy context for Integrated Youth Support is contained in four documents. These are Every Child Matters (2004), Youth Matters (2005), Youth Matters Next Steps (2006) and Aiming High for Young People (2008).

The Green Paper, ‘Youth Matters: Next Steps’ made a series of proposals,

” to provide a balance of opportunity, support and challenge to ensure a successful transition for every young person to adulthood.”

The two key elements of Universal and Targeted Youth Support were identified in this document and four overarching objectives were set out. These were:

Empowering young people

Ensuring they are engaged in shaping the services they receive and providing more things to do and places to go and someone to talk to.

(This has been the subject of much work in the authority, for example in the work of

(the Youth Forums, the Young People's Parliament, the Children in Care Council, the Youth Opportunities Fund, the Youth Capital Fund and the commissioning process for super-centres and satellites. Wirral is judged outstanding in this aspect);

Making a contribution

Encouraging more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities.

(Again much work has been done, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Wirral Award Scheme).

Reforming targeted support

Providing better, more personalised, intensive support for those young people with the greatest needs.

(Each individual service in this area of work in Wirral is highly regarded and has received positive external evaluation. The central purpose of this report is to ensure that the services are better co-ordinated and can work together in a more integrated way. Further detail is given in Section 2. This is in line with the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Supporting choices

Providing better information, advice and guidance to help young people make more informed choices.

(High quality services have previously been provided by the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership. Changes in regulations have led to this service being re-commissioned. Reports have previously been presented to Cabinet and a further update appears in Section 3. Changes recommended in this report are designed to enable us to manage the new relationship with the Connexions provider to ensure that services continue to improve).

2.0 Targeted Youth Support

- 2.1 The central aim of targeted youth support is to help vulnerable young people early, to address their difficulties as soon as possible and prevent their problems escalating. This often means working with young people who may not meet traditional thresholds for statutory or specialist services, but who, without help are at future risk of further problems such as substance misuse, youth offending, teenage pregnancy and homelessness.

In particular, this is likely to include young people who experience a combination of the factors below:

- Persistent absence or exclusion from school
- Behaviour problems
- Poor emotional, social or coping skills
- Poor mental health
- Learning difficulties and disabilities
- Low self efficacy
- Poor aspirations
- Attitudes which condone risky behaviour
- Poor family support, family conflict or parental substance misuse
- Poor support networks
- Family or friends, or involvement in gangs, who condone high risk activities
- Living in a deprived neighbourhood
- Poverty

- 2.2 Targeted youth support aims to ensure that the needs of vulnerable teenagers are identified early and met by agencies working together effectively – in ways that are shaped by the views and experiences of young people themselves.

There are seven elements of targeted youth support:

- Strengthening the influence of vulnerable young people, and their families and communities, and their ability to bring about positive change;
- Identifying vulnerable young people early, in the context of their everyday lives;
- Building a clear picture of individual needs, shared by young people and the agencies working with them, using the common assessment framework (CAF);
- Enabling vulnerable young people to receive early support in universal settings. Help all agencies to draw in extra help on behalf of young people, through better links with other agencies and organisations;
- Ensuring vulnerable young people receive a personalised package of support, information, advice and guidance, and learning and development opportunities, with support for their parents or carers as appropriate. This should be coordinated by a trusted lead professional and delivered by agencies working well together;
- Providing support for vulnerable young people across transitions, for example, moving on from school or from the support of one service to another as needs change;
- Making services more accessible, attractive and relevant for vulnerable young people.

- 2.3 More specific proposals to support these ideas were made by the Government in, 'Aiming High for Young People; a ten-year strategy for positive activities'. The document identified the following themes empowerment of young people:

greater access to provision;
quality workforce;
community cohesion.

It went on to provide a number of commitments. These included:

- Extension of Youth Opportunity Fund to 2011;
- A requirement to devolve 5% spending on activities to young people by 2010;
- A requirement to build capacity for 3rd sector delivery, especially with disadvantaged young people;
- A high quality youth facility in each constituency;
- A commitment to create spaces for young people to go;
- A year round youth offer of Positive Activities for Young People;

- 2.4 Monitoring of this work is built into our performance management framework. The key Public Service Agreement targets in this area as set out by government include:

- To reduce 16-18 year olds who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) to 6.9% by 2010 (This includes ensuring those 16-18 Not Known are at least 0.5% below NEET);

- Increase the proportion of 19 year olds achieving NVQ level 2;
- Reduce the use of Class A drugs and the frequent use of illicit drugs amongst young people under the age of 25, especially by the most vulnerable young people;
- To reduce the Under 18 conception rate by 50% by 2010;
- 60% of young people aged 13-19 gaining a recorded outcome compared to the % of young people participating in YW in the LA area;
- 30% of young people aged 13-19 gaining an accredited outcome compared to the % of young people participating in YW in the LA area.

The above targets have all been subject to previous reporting and are key elements of the Children and Young Peoples Plan.

2.5 Youth Support is currently provided in Wirral by a range of services. These include the following:

The Youth Offending Service

YOS is a multi-disciplinary team managed as a partly free standing service within the Children and Young People's Department. It is accountable nationally to the Youth Justice Board for England and is funded through a combination of money from the Ministry of Justice and partner contributions. Principal amongst these is the Council. Local governance is provided by the Youth Justice Management Board which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The service works with young offenders in specialist, court determined work and it also works preventatively with young people believed to be at risk of offending. This second aspect of its work is akin to targeted youth support.

The Youth Outreach and Response Teams

These form part of the Youth Service within the Children and Young People's Department. They are funded largely as part of the Council's revenue budget with additional use being made of specific grant regimes. Governance is provided through the structures of the Children and Young People's Department including the Cabinet and the Children's Trust. Specific oversight is provided by the Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee (YAPSAC). Colleagues work outside of youth club settings with young people largely aged 14 plus. In the case of Outreach, this is done wherever young people gather and is focussed on engaging them in positive and diversionary activity. In the case of Response the work is particularly focussed on young people using drugs or alcohol or those at risk of sexual exploitation.

The Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team

This multi-disciplinary team forms part of the Regeneration Department in its community safety role. It is focussed on reducing the level of anti-social behaviour in Wirral and its impact on communities; improving perceptions of anti-social behaviour and improving confidence in agencies' abilities to tackle unacceptable behaviour. This applies to work both with young people and with adults, some of whom are, of course, the parents of young people who themselves form part of the client group for targeted youth support. Some of the work of the team is directed towards enforcement but much is also aimed at prevention. Key aspects of this strand include targeted work with families. A great deal of the work of the team is akin to targeted youth support and has particular strengths in its understanding of the impact of the family context, for

example through the Family Intervention Programme and the “Supernanny” initiative. The team is funded largely through grants, the level of which have grown significantly in recent years. Governance is provided through the structures of the Regeneration Department including the Cabinet and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

Other Related Services

Several other teams are in existence, or about to be formed, whose work impinges on Targeted Youth Support. They include the Youth Sports Nights initiative in the Regeneration Department and others that stem from a social care or health perspective. The lead Council department for the latter is the Children and Young People’s Department and they include the following:

The Education Social Welfare Service in the Children and Young People’s Department has a primary focus on increasing school attendance but also has involvement in preventative work to deal with the underlying causes of absence;

Wirral Alternative Schools Programme (WASP), based at the Solar Campus, provides educational opportunities for young people excluded from school and, in its “extended school” role, continues to provide opportunities beyond the school day;

The Adolescent Crisis Team, also in the Children and Young People’s Department works with young people not in care where family relationships are breaking down. It strives to re-build these relationships but if necessary, will arrange for youngsters to be accommodated by the authority;

The Multi-Systemic Therapy Team is newly formed in collaboration with Wirral and West Cheshire Partnership Trust, linked to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. It uses a range of psychologically based approaches to work with individual young people showing serious antisocial behaviour and generally involved with the criminal justice system;

The Family Nurse Partnership is also newly formed in collaboration with NHS Wirral. It uses sustained and intensive support from specially trained health visitors to work with young parents to try to ensure that strong parenting skills are developed. There will often have been a history over generations of poor outcomes for children in these families and this is the earliest of early interventions to try to break the cycle;

The Youth Sports Nights Programme has run for many years in the Sports Development Unit, currently part of the Regeneration Department. Evening sports activities are organised in some of the most deprived areas of the borough to engage young people in positive, productive activity. There is a strong emphasis on developing responsibility and community leadership through sport and work is targeted on young people who might otherwise be drawn into unproductive activity. The Unit, amongst other things, also co-ordinates the **Positive Futures Programme**, which is a national social inclusion programme using sport and leisure activities to engage with disadvantaged and socially marginalised young people. The aim is to have a positive influence on young people's lives by widening horizons and providing access to new opportunities within a culturally familiar environment. Sport and leisure activities are used as a catalyst to encourage project participation and young people are steered towards education, training and employment.

- 2.6 This report proposes that the Youth Offending Service, the Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Sports Development Unit are brought together to work alongside the Youth Service in the Children and Young People’s Department. They would all be placed in the Participation and Inclusion Branch of the Department. To

bring coherence, co-ordination and leadership to Integrated Youth Support, it is proposed that a post of Strategic Service Manager (third tier) should be established in the Branch. It would be funded from the Connexions allocation in the Area Based Grant and would also lead on managing the new relationship with the Connexions provider (see below).

- 2.7 There is strong evidence of gains to be made when closely related teams can be co-located and this has been feature of the work of the Children and Young People's Department in recent years. In line with the Strategic Asset Review, the Youth Offending Service was moved this year to the Solar Campus, a listed building, where it is now co-located with WASP. This enabled Cavendish House to be released for sale and Bridge Court to be vacated. Under these proposals the Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Sports Development Unit would also be re-located to the Solar Campus and this would enable shared services and collaborative approaches to be developed. It would also allow part of the Old Court House building and space at Grange Rd West Sports Centre to be vacated and the net amount of office space to be reduced; this is required by the Strategic Asset Review.

3.0 Connexions

- 3.1 The commissioning of Connexions is the subject of a separate report (Cabinet 15 October). This report makes a number of recommendations:
- To agree the recommendation to award the contract to Greater Merseyside Connexions Service for the period July 2010 to March 2012.
 - To give delegated power to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, on advice from the Director of Children's Services, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management, to sign a funding agreement between Wirral Borough Council and Halton Borough Council for the Management of this contract.

There will be a need under these new arrangements to manage this relationship, to ensure that there is full contract compliance and that the service continues to develop. Part of the role of the Strategic Service Manager (Integrated Youth Support), proposed in this report, will be to ensure contract compliance.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Minor works will need to be carried out at the Solar Campus to accommodate Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team at an estimated cost of £50,000.
- 4.2 The Strategic Service Manager IYS will be funded from the Connexions grant.
- 4.3 The Anti-Social Behaviour Team has a budget of £208,900 together with funding from partners and other organisations totalling £865,925 (2009/10).
- 4.4 No additional revenue implications for the Council are envisaged as a result of the proposed structural changes.

5. Staffing Implications

- 5.1 The Anti-Social Behaviour Team is a multi-disciplinary team of 35 officers (4 are currently seconded from CYP). Consultations will need to take place with trade unions regarding the transfer of staff between departments.
- 5.2 A post of Strategic Service Manager (Integrated Youth Support) will be established in the Children and Young People's Department.

6. Equal Opportunities Implications

- 6.1 The Strategic Service Manager position will be a national advertisement.
- 6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to these proposals. No major adverse impacts were identified.

7. Community Safety Implications

- 7.1 The major purposes of the proposals are,

to improve the effectiveness of our services relating to anti-social and offending behaviour of young people and
to improve the support for our young people who are vulnerable or who face challenging circumstances in their lives.

Both these objectives are central to community safety. They will be achieved by unified line management and better co-ordination. The co-location of universal and targeted youth services at the Solar Campus will lead to efficiencies and improved management. Connexions contribute to the support of vulnerable young people by helping them to make the transition to working life.

8. Local Agenda 21 Implications

- 8.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

9. Planning Implications

- 9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

10. Anti-poverty Implications

- 10.1 None directly arise from this report though the services involved have an impact on the effectiveness with which young people make the transition to adult and working life.

11. Social Inclusion Implications

- 11.1 Developments in this area will lead to improved early intervention.

14. Local Member Support Implications

- 14.1 Young people who access universal and targeted support reside in all Wards of the borough.

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 The future of Connexions Services in Wirral – 29 November 2007 Cabinet.
- 15.2 Connexions Transition 19 March 2009 Cabinet Paper.
- 15.3 Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review 11 November 2008 Children Services.
- 15.4 Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet 10th December 2008.
- 15.5 Commissioning Criteria for Universal, Open Access Youth Support Services 23rd April 2009 Cabinet Paper.
- 15.6 Reconfiguration of Youth Service Provision 27th November 2008 Cabinet.
- 15.7 Youth MATTERS Green Paper DCSF 2005 and Youth MATTERS Next Steps DCSF 2006.
- 15.8 Aiming High for young people; a ten year strategy DCSF 2007.

Recommendations

That:

- (1) The Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Sports Development Unit be transferred from the Regeneration Department to the Children and Young People's Department and co-located at the Solar Campus;
- (2) In order to ensure compliance of the Connexions Contract and to manage the integrated Youth Support Service a Strategic Manager (Integrated Youth Support) be appointed.
- (3) The Youth Offending Service (YOS), currently free standing, is moved to the Participation and Inclusion Branch.

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