

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DOON VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2007

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW OF YOUTH WORK SERVICES

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Doon Valley Local Committee of the outcome of a review of Community Learning and Development Youth Work Services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** At the Education Committee of 22 March 2005 a report was presented regarding the Community Learning and Development Service Best Value Review. One of the actions arising from this review was the recognition that certain aspects of youth work provision required to be given more detailed consideration.
- 2.2** This work has been ongoing and the undernoted sets out some of the key findings in relation to the review. A summary of the recommendations is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 2.3** A report was presented to Education Committee on 7 November 2006 setting out the outcome of the findings.

3. KEY YOUTH WORK STATISTICS IN 2005/2006

- 3.1** Key youth work statistics are as follows:

- 10 youth workers supported in the delivery of services to young people;
- 21 from the Doon Valley Local Committee area attended the 10th Annual Youth Conference;
- supervising officer for 2 voluntary youth organisations receiving Community Regeneration Funding
- youth forums established with 18 active members;
- 15 young people participated in XL Groups supported by Community Link Workers;
- 9 young people involved in Peer Education Group

4. DEFINING THE PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK

4.1 There have been several key documents over recent years which have defined the purpose of youth work and specifically the role for Community Learning and Development in relation to working with young people. These reports are:

- Step It Up: Charting Young People's Progress Report 2003;
- Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities, the National Guidance for Community Learning and Development: 2004
- Youthlink Scotland Statement on Youth Work: 2005
- Youth Work – Opportunities for All: August 2006

4.2 A Curriculum for Excellence also has an impact on the work of the Community Learning and Development Service. Youth work within the context of Community Learning and Development can clearly contribute to a Curriculum for Excellence and its broad aims for young people.

4.3 Overall, youth work is about engaging young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development. There are three distinctive elements:

- young people choose to participate;
- the work builds from where young people are; and
- it recognises the young person and youth worker are partners in a learning process.

5. KEY FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

5.1 Youth work has always been a key priority for the Community Learning and Development Service, however, the work of the service in relation to young people has changed significantly over the years. The main focus of services in relation to young people is on active citizenship work, youth worker training, peer education, youth information, support to voluntary organisations, youth achievement programmes and detached and outreach work.

5.2 Youth work has mainly been delivered to the 11-25 age group with a particular emphasis on 11-18 year olds. Specific work with under 11's is carried out by Community Link Workers in Learning Partnerships and this should continue. However, youth work within local communities should remain a focus for 11-25 year olds.

5.3 Youth work needs to be available to all young people and reflect the needs of young people with disabilities, from ethnic minority backgrounds or who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender. This will not necessarily mean that separate programmes are established, however, there needs to be an awareness of the needs of all young people to ensure support in integrated or dedicated youth work programmes.

6. YOUTH INFORMATION

- 6.1** Access to information to enable young people to make informed choices and decisions is an important aspect of youth work. Dialogue Youth is an excellent example of how young people can access local national information on line. It is recommended that access to information remains a priority for the service and that a range of approaches continue and further develop to enable young people to access information. Dialogue Youth will require to remain central to this on behalf of Community Planning Partners.

7. ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1** Community Learning and Development plays a key role in the development and support of active citizenship opportunities for young people. The current range of activities include:

- Area Youth Forums
- Multi-Agency Youth Forums
- Student Council
- Youth Conference
- Community Capacity Building
- Support to Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament
- Community Learning and Development Plans

- 7.2** It is recommended that all active citizenship groups review their current mechanisms for collating information, communicating with other young people and feeding into the decision making processes. The structured basis for this requires to be Area Youth Forums which will feed into the Multi-Agency Youth Forum. It is recommended however that further research is undertaken to examine other models of Multi-Agency Youth forums which could assist to enhance the current structure within East Ayrshire.

8. YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT

- 8.1** The service delivers youth achievement programmes within schools and community settings. All the awards promoted are inclusive, non competitive, operate at the pace of the individual and focuses on personal development.
- 8.2** Recognising the challenges for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), Community Learning and Development have a potential role to play through the further development of youth achievement programmes and other initiatives delivered by the service.
- 8.3** The undernoted sets out the current achievement awards:
- East Ayrshire Youth Award
 - John Muir Award
 - Duke of Edinburgh's Award
 - XL Princes Trust

- Young Quality Scot

8.4 Recommendations are made in the report in relation to all of the awards. In particular, it is recommending overall that there is a consistency across the local authority area in the development of these awards.

9. PROJECTS

9.1 There are a number of funded projects which take forward the delivery of youth work services. These include Youth Outreach, Peer Education and New Directions (Youth Literacies). It is recognised that for some of these specialist projects, sustainability is an issue. There will always be a need to seek external funding for some service specific developments depending on a particular focus of activity at any point in time. The issue for the service is how to continue with the good practice which is developed in projects whilst recognising that not all will be able to be funded over a longer period of time.

10. SUPPORT TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR

10.1 The service provides support to a number of voluntary organisations delivering youth work or managing services in local communities. It is recommended that the service focuses its work with youth projects where Service Level Agreements are in place in relation to improving standards and the implementation of "How Good is Our Community Learning and Development 2?" self evaluation framework.

11. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

11.1 To ensure good quality youth work, youth workers require to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to support and deliver the modern youth work agenda. There are a number of issues for the service to address regarding recruitment, induction training and ongoing professional development. Recommendations are set out in the full report in this regard.

12. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Supporting and working with young people is a key strand of both the Children and Young People's Services Plan 2005-2008 and the Promoting Community Learning Theme of the Community Plan.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Nil.

14. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Nil.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 It is recommended that Members of the Doon Valley Local Committee:

- (i) note the contents of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

GS/KG/SR
11th December 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Community Learning and Development Service Best Value Review - Education Committee 22 March 2005.
2. Community Learning and Development Review of Youth Work Services – Education Committee 7 November 2006.

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104 or Dot Grieve, Principal Officer (Community Learning and Development), Tel: (01563) 578127.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW OF YOUTH WORK

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

October 2006

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

YOUTH WORK WITHIN THE SERVICE

1. The focus of youth work within the service remains with the 11- 25 year olds.
2. The needs of all young people are taken into account when planning programmes and that where there is a specific need for dedicated programmes this will taken forward. Awareness training for youth workers will continue to be included in youth work training.
3. Community Learning and Development should continue to have a role in direct delivery of services to young people. Where Service Level Agreements are in place the role of the Service should be one of support and challenge.

YOUTH WORK APPROACHES

4. A range of youth work opportunities should continue to be available within each team in order to be responsive to the needs of young people and local communities.
5. It is recommended that access to information remains a priority and that a range of approaches continue to be used to enable young people to access information.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP & CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

6. All the active citizenship groups should review their current mechanisms for collating information, communicating with other young people and feeding into the decision making processes.
7. It is recommended that the youth forums continue to be supported and used as a medium in which to consult with young people. It is also recommend that the forums evaluate the ways in which information is fed back to both young people and the Council.
8. MSYP's should continue to be supported and that they also continue to work closely with young people involved in the other active citizenship programmes.
9. It is recommended that further research is undertaken to examine other models which could assist to enhance the current structure within East Ayrshire.
10. The Service should continue to offer support to Student Councils and that the Student Councils examine the ways in which they link to the other active citizenship groups.

11. It is recommended that the Youth Conference continues to be an annual event but that as part of the ongoing development consideration is given to the format and numbers attending to ensure it continues to be meaningful for young people.
12. Young people should continue to be involved in the community learning and development plan process and where possible the success of the 4U Community Plan for young people should be replicated.
13. It is recommended that Dialogue Youth continue to use ICT as a mean of consulting and engaging young people. It is also recommended that the youth forums and student councils examine how Dialogue Youth could further assist them in their communication with young people.

YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT

14. Based on the success of the pilot it is recommended that the East Ayrshire Youth Award is rolled out across all three geographic areas.
15. Opportunities to further develop the John Muir Award with young people and with families should be explored.
16. It is recommended that when funding becomes available a Youth Achievement Development Workers post is established to coordinate the various award programmes, deliver training on the awards and assist in the support to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Association.

SUPPORT TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR

17. It is recommended that the Service continues to carry out a needs assessment with each organisation to clearly identify support requirements and agree a programme of support. This also means exiting from groups as appropriate.
18. The Service should continue to support as appropriate organisations and assist them to implementing the “How Good is our Community Learning and Development 2” self evaluation framework.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

19. It is recommended that the local press and the Council communications systems are used more effectively to raise awareness of the opportunities to become a youth worker and that the recruitment procedures for youth workers are reviewed.
20. The current basic introduction to youth work course should update and a programme of training established across the Authority. It is further recommended that all youth workers whether paid or working in a voluntary capacity undertake the training within a year of being appointed.

21. Induction training should commence at the start of the youth work session and that discussions take place with East Ayrshire Training Unit on appropriate Corporate Induction for youth workers.
22. It is recommended that further discussions take place with Kilmarnock College regarding the delivery of the course to youth workers and that funding opportunities are explored to support youth workers to undertake this training.
23. An annual youth workers training programme should be developed and issued to all youth workers.
24. Young people should continue to have access to volunteering opportunities and that appropriate training is developed to support them. The idea of youth work apprenticeships for young people should also be explored.

COMMUNICATION

25. A youth workers seminar should be held on an annual basis to enable all youth workers to share good practice, discuss national and local issues and recognise achievements in youth work practice.
26. It is recommended that each youth group has an identified worker from Community Learning and Development who will provide direct support to youth workers and who will visit the group every 3/4 weeks to provide support, offer assistance and to pass on information.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

27. It is recommended that youth workers receive training on quality assurance as part of their youth worker training and are supported to implement appropriate planning and evaluations systems within the youth work setting.
28. The principle of nightly record sheets should be kept but that the format is updated.
29. It is recommended that appropriate and creative evaluation tools continue to be used with young people to encourage them to respond.
30. It is recommended that individual and group learning plans are implemented appropriately within youth work and that further discussion take place with young people on the best way in which to record their personal development in more informal settings.

PROMOTION OF YOUTH WORK OPPORTUNITIES

31. It is recommended that regular reports on youth work are presented to Education and Local Committees, that the Dialogue Youth and East Ayrshire Council websites and publications are used more effectively and key events such as National Youth Work Week are used to raise the profile of youth work.

32. Young people should be actively encouraged to design and contribute to community learning and development promotional materials.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

33. It is important that working in partnership with other departments, agencies and local organisations continues in order to develop targeted multi agency approaches to work with young people, in order to create opportunities for young people, maximise resources and avoid duplication.

FACILITIES

34. It is recommended that existing community facilities including partners facilities are maximised for the delivery of youth work and that external funding is sought to improve facilities for young people.