

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 7 NOVEMBER 2006

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 Education 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. The full report is available at the Members Information Point. A summary of the recommendations is attached as an appendix to this report.

3. KEY YOUTH WORK STATISTICS IN 2005/2006

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

- Community Link Workers supported over 296 young people through Breakfast Clubs;
- 3 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament supported by the Service;
- 73 youth workers supported in the delivery of services to young people;
- 193 young people attended the 10th Annual Youth Conference;
- 8 voluntary youth organisations working with young people supported. This includes organisations with Service Level Agreements and who receive Community Regeneration Funding;
- 11 young people successfully achieved Young Quality Scot Awards;
- 2601 Young Scot cards issued by Dialogue Youth;

- 3 youth forums established with 66 active members;
- 3778 young people contacted through youth outreach;
- 74 young people participated in XL Groups supported by Community Link Workers;
- 20 young people involved in Peer Education received Millennium Volunteer Awards;
- 21 Duke of Edinburgh's Award certificates presented to young people;
- 28 young people participated in the East Ayrshire Youth Award and successfully achieved their Bronze Youth Award.

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:

- Set 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. POLICY & LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Nil.

13. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

13.1 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.

14. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Nil.

15. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Nil.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to present the findings of the Youth Work Review to Local Committees; and
- (ii) note the contents of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

GS/KG/SR
19 October 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Community Learning and Development Service Best Value Review - Education Committee 22 March 2005.

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.

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