

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2006

#### DIALOGUE YOUTH INITIATIVE UPDATE REPORT

##### Report by Executive Director (Educational & Social Services)

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Policy & Resources Committee with a summary of the progress to date of the Dialogue Youth initiative and the priorities for the forthcoming period to March 2007.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Dialogue Youth is a major national youth initiative established in the 32 local authorities throughout Scotland. The initiative forms an important part of the Scottish Executive's agenda to modernise the way government works at local and national level through the community planning process. The initiative addresses key national priorities, namely:

- access to quality health information
- a significant contribution to the education national priority 4 (values and citizenship) through personal and social development programmes
- the opportunity to involve young people in local democratic decision making processes
- the opportunity for agencies within East Ayrshire to consult young people
- provision of quality information regarding careers and opportunities for young people

- 2.2 Funding for the development has been secured through the Modernising Government Fund, European Social Fund and Community Regeneration Fund. Reports on the use of funds have been regularly reported to Policy and Resources Committee and to the appropriate funding bodies.

- 2.3 Locally the East Ayrshire Dialogue Youth Unit aims to:

- develop and make available to every young person of secondary school age (12-18) a local youth card incorporating new technology and based on existing Young Scot package
- develop and maintain a localised internet portal containing relevant information linked to the National Young Scot portal ([www.youngscot.org](http://www.youngscot.org))
- support existing youth information networks and develop Personal Social Educational programmes in schools and youth work settings

- develop outreach information points and new technology infrastructure in appropriate premises across the Council area e.g. libraries, cyber cafes, youth clubs.
- act as a central resource and research base on youth issues and youth planning, sharing information and good practice
- develop direct contact with young people through a partnership with new technology based services (Smartcard, portal, e-mail and SMS text messaging)
- stimulate and assist the development of partnership and collaborative action on youth issues and services. Dialogue Youth will be promoted as the key vehicle for consulting with and engaging young people.
- encourage and support the active involvement of young people in all aspects of the core activities of the Dialogue Youth initiative

### **3. PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 3.1** East Ayrshire Dialogue Youth unit became operational in November 2003. The undernoted highlights some of the developments which have taken place in 2005/6.
- 3.2** Over 5000 young people have been supplied with the free East Ayrshire Young Scot 'smartened' card. This card contains access to local and national discounts, access to leisure and library facilities, access to information services, proof of age pass and DSS identification. The card is complemented by a Pan Ayrshire information booklet.
- 3.3** The localised East Ayrshire Young Scot information portal [www.youngscot.org/eastayrshire](http://www.youngscot.org/eastayrshire) has been live since July 2004. The average number of hits per month is 1123.
- 3.4** Strong cross-agency and cross-departmental partnerships have been formed with the following to progress the Young Scot card facility, the information portal and other components of the initiative:
- Community Link Workers
  - Library Services
  - E-Government/IT Services
  - Leisure and Recreation Services
  - NHS Ayrshire and Arran
  - Careers Scotland
  - Community Learning and Development Service
  - Strathclyde Police
  - Heads of Secondary, Primary & Special Schools
  - Social Work Services
  - Trading Standards

- Employment/Training Initiatives
- Community Learning Plan partners
- Pan-Ayrshire & National Dialogue Youth Units
- Voluntary Sector
- Young people within organisations including Prince's Trust, Prince's Trust Carers, Avonlea, Yipworld, Zone and North West Youth Centres, Looking Forward Group, 4 Connexions, Riverside Centre

**3.5** The Dialogue Youth initiative has been integrated within the Children and Young Person's Service Plan, the Community Plan and area Community Learning Plans.

**3.6** The initiative has established itself as a key mechanism for consulting with young people and supporting their involvement in the democratic process. This includes involvement with resident Survey panel developments, MSYP Elections, the Scottish Youth Parliament, consultation on young people and disability for the Community Learning Plan on Disability, the development of the Community Learning Plan for Young People, and the consultation regarding young people's views on the aspirations of the Community Plan.

**3.7** Hack Pack web journalism training has been delivered to 49 young people and youth work staff throughout East Ayrshire in order to support the maintenance and content renewal of the localised information portal.

**3.8** PSE/Active Citizenship resources have been used to support and develop P7 transition programmes, Active Citizenship Summer School, Family Learning sessions and XL clubs throughout East Ayrshire.

#### **4. PRIORITIES TO MARCH 2007 AND EMERGING ISSUES**

**4.1** Dialogue Youth will continue to work towards its overall objectives within this financial year. A particular focus will be on the local discounters group which will aim to secure further discounts with retailers in East Ayrshire.

**4.2** It will take the lead in consulting with young people on behalf of the Child Protection Committee about the protection of children.

**4.3** The initiative has taken the lead role in consulting with young people about the National Consultation on youth work.

**4.4** Early planning work is taking place with regard to the role Dialogue Youth may play if the travel element of National Entitlement Cards are announced nationally.

**4.5** The Council is developing a strategy to address the needs of those young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). As part of this strategy, it is seeking to capitalise and make best use of the experience and expertise of Dialogue Youth.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** The Dialogue Youth Initiative has been funded through a range of funding sources, which will terminate in March 2007. Community Planning Partners are currently seeking alternative funding to ensure the sustainability of this initiative.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** The Dialogue Youth Initiative is an integral part of East Ayrshire's Community Plan and Children and Young People's Services Plan.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1** It is recommended that Members of the Policy & Resources Committee:
- (i) note progress made in respect of the Dialogue Youth Initiative;
  - (ii) endorse the Council's continued involvement with the Dialogue Youth Initiative; and
  - (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

Graham Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

KG/SR  
17 October 2006

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Policy and resources Committee Dialogue Youth Initiative Update report – 30 September 2004
2. East Ayrshire Coalfield Area – Social Inclusion Partnership Performance Monitoring Form (Final Report 2004/05)
3. Young People's Community Learning Plan for Young People Report (See Ciss for final version)

Members wishing further information should contact Margaret Gardiner, Manager Dialogue Youth, Tel: 01290 429374 or Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: 01563 576104.

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR**