

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 NOVEMBER 2002

MODERNISING GOVERNMENT FUND PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH DIALOGUE YOUTH UNITS ACROSS LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SCOTLAND

Report of Director of Educational & Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To seek Committee approval for the Council to match fund the establishment of a temporary Dialogue Youth Unit.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** COSLA and Young Scot Enterprise have successfully been allocated £3,348,000 to develop a Dialogue Youth Initiative. Funding is available until March 2004 and will seek to:

- promote cross departmental and joint agency approaches to the development and delivery of services for young people
- provide a focus for engaging with young people in developing the full potential of new technology and providing accessible, relevant information
- stimulating lifelong learning, youth mobility, community safety, healthy lifestyle and enterprise in citizenship education through the promotion of Young Scot materials and the use of new technology
- promote citizenship by stimulating and supporting greater involvement by young people in the life of their communities
- promote social inclusion by involving young people as full partners in design, management and delivery of services and facilities.

A Dialogue Youth National Support Unit will be established by COSLA and Young Scot, to provide support to dedicated Dialogue Youth Units located within each local authority area.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1** East Ayrshire Council will receive £160,863 to take forward the initiative, £32,172 of which requires to be matched. The Council will require to use £24,052 of its allocation to purchase a Young Scot Smarter Card and associated literature and materials for every young person of secondary school age.

- 3.2** A national portal, the Young Scot National Youth Information Portal (www.youngscot.org) is already established and the funding will support the development and maintenance of a local internet portal to the Young Scot portal.
- 3.3** The funding can be allocated to both staffing and hardware. It is anticipated however, from experience elsewhere that at a minimum individual local authorities will require to establish dedicated Youth Dialogue Units comprising a Youth Worker, Information Technology Specialist and potentially a teaching secondment. The development should be led by a local Dialogue Youth Champion, probably at Chief Officer level. It is proposed that this is Head of Community Supports.
- 3.4** The proposals have the benefits of addressing key national priorities, namely:
- access to quality health information
 - a significant contribution to 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, including work with Community Learning Partnerships in relation to jobs in training at community capacity building
- 3.5** The Smarter Card has the potential to be used both in relation to reduction in costs for leisure and recreation; shops; travel arrangements but also to purchase school meals.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** Match funding of £32,172 is required in order to receive the Council's allocation of £160,863. This can straddle this financial year and 2003/2004. The Council would wish to pursue the issue of match funding with Community Planning Partners.

5. NEXT STEP

- 5.1** The Council requires to formally notify COSLA if it is formally signing up to the proposal. Arrangements will then be made to agree a local partnership agreement between the National Dialogue Youth Unit.

6. POLICY/LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** These proposals are in line with the overall aims of the Children and Young Persons Service Plan 2001-2004.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 It is recommended that Members of the Policy & Resources Committee:

- (i) approve the Council's involvement with Dialogue Youth
- (ii) remit to officers to seek a proportion of the match funding from Community Planning Partners
- (iii) ask the Director of Educational and Social Services and Director of Community Services to fund part of the Council's contribution from their respective budgets and;
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Services

KG/JW
28 October 2002

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR