

Social Issues Scrutiny Panel – 16 July 2009

Youth Facilities Informal Scrutiny Group - Final Report

Report of Head of Democratic Services

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Purpose of the Report

The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider this matter as part of its role in holding the Communities and Safety Portfolio Holder to account on the performance of the City Council's role in relation overall benefit to the public from services provided by the City Council and other organisations that impact on the wellbeing of the District. In particular this in-depth review had regard to the portfolio holder's responsibilities with regard to Community Development and Social Inclusion.

Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Business Plan

The work in this area is part of the core functions of the Partnerships, Communications and Improvement Division.

Recommended

That the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel

1. considers the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group as set out on pages 7 and 8 of the Report.
2. adds any additional recommendations that are considered appropriate.

Executive Summary

This report describes the work and conclusions of the Informal Scrutiny Group set up by the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel in order to review the City Council's involvement in the provision of facilities for the youth in the Winchester district.

The Group convened four times, with main topics of discussion as follows:

- **10 November 2009** – appointment of a chairman (Councillor Weston), consideration of the background and the scope of the scrutiny review.
- **27 March 2009** – explanation of the work of work of the Winchester District Children & Young People's Partnership and the receiving of evidence from the Youth Team Manager, Hampshire County Council.
- **24 April 2009** – receiving of evidence from Councillor John Cooper - Portfolio Holder for Communities and Safety.

- **16 June 2009** - receiving of evidence from the Manager of Hampshire Youth Options and consideration of recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group.

Background Documents

Working documents held in the Partnerships, Communication & Improvement division. Minutes of the meetings of the Informal Scrutiny Groups held in Democratic Services division.

Appendices

Appendix: Youth Facilities Informal Scrutiny Group Report



**SOCIAL ISSUES SCRUTINY PANEL
REPORT S092**

13 July 2009

**Report by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Review,
Councillor Victoria Weston**

**YOUTH FACILITIES
INFORMAL
SCRUTINY GROUP**

YOUTH FACILITIES INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN – Cllr Victoria Weston

Councillors

Achwall, Berry, Fall, Gemmel, Hammerton, Love, Tait,

(Also in attendance - Cllr Pines and Cllr Verney)

Organisations – brief outline of what they stand for:

Winchester District Strategic Partnership – Children and Young Peoples Partnership - Lorraine Mansfield

The Partnership is focused on supporting all children and young people aged 0-19 (and a smaller group of young people with particular needs to age 25). Everything that the Partnership does reflects the five key outcomes identified in Every Child Matters and the Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan:

- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Within that context the Winchester District Partnership is developing local priorities and projects.

The wider Partnership is open to all people and organisations working with and for children and young people in the Winchester District. Anyone is welcome to attend wider Partnership events.

The Strategic Group includes representatives from a number of agencies working in Winchester and is representative of the various sectors involved with children and young people. The agencies, networks and partnerships represented are:

- [Hampshire County Council \(Children's Services\)](#)
- [Winchester City Council](#)
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Further and Higher Education
- The Children's Fund
- Winchester Young Persons' Action Group (WYPAG)

- [Connexions](#)
- [Hampshire Children and Families' Forum](#)
- [Hampshire Primary Care Trust](#)
- [Hampshire Constabulary](#)
- Winchester Drug & Alcohol Reference Group (DARG)
- [School Sports Partnerships](#)
- [Winchester Area Community Action \(WACA\)](#)
- Other Voluntary Sector representatives

Hampshire County Council (HCC) Children's Services – Winchester Youth Team
- Manager – Liz Walker

Hampshire Youth Options (**HYO**) — Mark Dixon – Director

Hampshire Youth Options are an organisation operating since 1942 as a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. They are funded largely by grants and local authority support and fund raising. Over the last 5 years the organisation has grown and undertakes the managements of building and facilities throughout Hampshire. The organisation employs a small team of your work professional who are base in Winchester and help manage/support some 120 youth clubs, groups and projects in Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. They have 7 facilities including the KAYC and are affiliated with the Carrol Youth Centre in Stanmore and the North of Winchester Youth and Community Action Group.

Hampshire Youth Options offers a diverse range of opportunities for young people aged eight to twenty-one, who are subject to social and economic disadvantage. The organisation provides services itself and also works in partnership with other public and private organisations. The aims of the organisation are to support these young people to learn and develop essential to life skills, increase their participation within their communities, raise their self esteem and aspirations, and to enable them to achieve and be recognised for the valuable contribution they make to their communities

Winchester Youth Council

So far Youth of Winchester (YOW) has representatives from

- Kings school
- The Westgate School
- Perins School
- Swanmore School
- Osborne School
- Peter Symonds College

These young people will be the link between the school, school council and their peers and represent the views of young people in the Winchester District.

THE PURPOSE OF WYC IS TO PROVIDE A FORUM THROUGH SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES THAT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF WINCHESTER; SO THEY CAN COME TOGETHER, HAVE THEIR VOICE HEARD AND BRING ABOUT CHANGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE IN WINCHESTER AND THE WIDER COMMUNITIES.

These priorities were identified from the 'Who Runs This Place' event.

- Positive images of young people
- Bullying
- Transport
- Leisure Facilities (including letting people know what already exists)

This report sets out the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Youth facilities group as well as detailing various information that was acquired along the way.

INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main issues that have been highlighted from our meetings are:

- Communication
- Strategy for providing youth facilities – demand based. Evidence base data for projects in place.
- Inclusion and youth voice
- Manpower

Communication

It has become evident that communication with regards to youth facilities and funding is lacking and a central place for communication is essential. Much more needs to be done on the web site, easy access to information and contacts and web links to the various organisations and activities available. It was felt by the group that there is still much improvement with regards to information sharing. The very fact that this informal group had to 'squeeze' information out and that it wasn't immediately available, either to councillors or the wider general public suggests there are manpower issues to be investigated and more information sharing from The Children and Young Peoples Partnership.

Questions that should be raised are:

- Is sufficient staff time being given? Should we be looking into the Council's vacancy management policy?
- Community Wellbeing - has a staff of three, of which one was on maternity leave. The Group was unsure whether cover would be provided for the post holder during her absence
- What resources are available to staff?
- Is the present allowance enough? How do other nearby districts fare?
- Why is there not a central point for information?

Information on the various types of funding available and how to apply for them should be able to be accessed from a central point.

1. Recommendations

(i) The Portfolio Holder to ensure the Council's web site is much improved, with regard to communication of youth facilities and funding etc, within a time scale.

(ii) Improve the awareness to City Councillors and Parish councils of:

- **on going projects,**
- **the procedures in securing funding for new ventures involving young people and support for Parish Council when projects are undertaken**
- **contacts and the links between Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council – flow charts on how the various group are related and link together**
- **contact names and details updated regularly.**

Although the portfolio holder, on behalf of the cabinet, has an overview of youth provision within the district, it remains unclear who takes ownership of youth provision within the local partnership. The chain of responsibility and command could be identified more directly. It is also unclear who has the role of challenging actions or acting as a 'champion' of young people.

Strategy

Despite the number of ongoing projects that are geared to the young people of the Winchester District a clear strategy for providing sustainable and resourced youth facilities is lacking. Amongst the group it was felt that there is still a void for the age group 13 to 19. Most projects cater for the younger age groups 8 to 13 year olds. Many of these projects are the responsibility of the Parish Councils and a support strategy to the Parish Councils groups is not easily accessed.

It is unclear where the demand for the projects has come from and there is a lack of evidence based material. The Portfolio holder talked about rural youth facilities and the "hubbing" of youth facilities in the rural areas. A clear strategy and joined up communication together with transport issues need to be in place at the onset of any such development.

One approach to collecting information could be to develop a geographic model of existing facilities and weigh it against the demographics of each large community within the district, using census data. In a financially restricted climate, Youth Hubs could be developed in the larger rural or urban areas with outreach in the smaller communities.

Inclusion and Youth Voice

Use of 'Youth of Winchester' is good as far as it goes to represent the views of, and consult with young people but cannot be considered a broad enough net. Only those in traditional education are thus consulted. Young people outside this net need further consideration – especially those in the 'hard to reach' groups, those who have

left the education system but are jobless, and those who are not comfortable in more formal structures.

The County Council Young People's strategy offers a model approach to recognising the importance of consulting young people at each stage of the strategy process. This cannot be regarded as a 'tick box' exercise but needs to become bedded into the Local Partnership's plans and strategies at every level – and clearly shown to be there.

There are a number of questions that can be raised from this report alone and the group would require written responses from the Portfolio holder and the Community Wellbeing Manager (Lorraine Mansfield), prior to our report going to Social Scrutiny.

2. Recommendation

(i) That a progress report and timetable of improvements to ensure monitoring continues to be reported to the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel

INFORMATION

FUNDING

The Group looked into available funding and how to obtain it. The main funding streams are:

Youth opportunity fund – centrally allocated by Central Government to HCC – and is administered by the Commissioning Coordination Unit and the YCF (Youth Capital Fund) is processed by a group of senior managers in HCC.

Youth Opportunity Fund – Youth Capital Fund. This funding is allocated by central government to HCC . YOF funding is administered by the Commissioning Co-ordination Unit and YCF is processed by a group of senior managers in HCC

The funds are intended to give young people, aged between 13 and 19 years, more choice and the opportunity to take greater control over what is available in their area. The funds are to be distributed at young people's discretion on projects raised by young people to improve things to do and places to go in their area.

YOF funds are intended to involve young people, especially hard to reach young people, in identifying positive activities and things to do; and to support their role as decision makers, grant givers and project leaders.

YCF funds are intended to provide the capital element of projects young people say they want. For example youth shelters, mobile youth units, skate parks, park improvements and for ICT equipment.

Groups of young people from Hampshire who are aged between 13-19 years can apply for grants. Projects that involve or benefit groups of vulnerable young people will be given additional weighting in the decision making processes. Applications

have to be supported by an organisation, and the Winchester youth team can help young people find a suitable organisation and write a bid.

Funding applications are considered by a young peoples panel, which in Winchester, is made up of young people from YOW and others. Approved YOF bids that are under £4,999 are sent to the Commissioning Unit for scrutiny and are processed from there, whilst approved bids over £4,999 need to be approved by the HCC County Exec.

Approved YCF bids are processed by a groups of senior managers in HCC.

Winchester currently receives £53,606 YOF funding per year. The YCF is a £514,000 county wide pot.

It was noted that of the total Youth Capital Funds available across the three administrative regions of the county, some youth management teams had developed considerable expertise gaining funds for their districts, but others had not. The Winchester local partnership could develop its ability to draw down funds from this source.

Funding available from Push incentive - More information is to be supplied by Portfolio holder – funding will be available from the Push incentive for funding in the southern parishes for youth projects - this will be through WCC.

OTHER INITIATIVES THAT ARE IN THE PIPE LINE

'Z' Card

A new credit card size sized 'Z' card has been produced. This had been funded in full by government and contained a range of information for young people, including support and advice services, groups and clubs etc. Every 13 – 19 year old in the district was to each receive a copy via schools or youth projects.

Extended Services

By 2010, all schools are required to provide 'extended services' in clusters. These will be a range of clubs and activities for school age children, inclusive of primary ages. Each 'cluster' coordinates their activities – there are two partnership clusters covering the Winchester District – The 'More than Schools' partnership covers the Winchester & Swanmore cluster. Perins and its feeder primaries is served by the 'Alton Bucle' which straddles the Winchester District & also covers part of East Hants. More than Schools publishes an 'extended services' magazine that publicises the services available for its cluster area. This has been produced for every school child in that area.

Important points to be aware of :

Silver Hill has a dedicated indoor open space planned but there have been no takers for this facility.

A number of Parish Councils are reluctant to spend their open space money on youth facilities.

On-going youth projects

Whitely

Funding from WCC is available for the provision of a youth facility driven by the Parish Council. A proposal from the Parish Council is still awaited.

Curdrige – WCC together with the Parish Council are providing funding to allow young people to join in with Eastleigh and Botley at the YMCA at Fairthorne Manor.

Wickham and Knowle - Funding for a skate Park and play facilities from WCC – this is tied up in a legal argument with Berkley homes. Wickham PC has ownership of this project.

Rural Youth Theatre – WCC fund to take it out to rural areas of Bishops Waltham, Swanmore and Denmead.

Forestry Commission - 'It's OK to Play' - £200,000 lottery funding secured to deliver 4 bespoke natural play sites on Forestry omission land at Creech Woods Denmead, West Walk – Newtown/Wickham, West Wood and Micheldever Wood – It's OK to Play also provides a part time outreach worker who is based at the Forestry Commission site office at Micheldever Wood.

Play Builder Projects – 8 to 13 yrs olds – one in Soberton near completion and the other in The Valley Stamore to start 2010.

Free Swimming is available to young people aged 16 years or under at the River Park Leisure Centre, Winchester.

HCC contact details

Liz Walker	Youth Team Manager	01962 876361	07773 316360
liz.walker@hants.gov.uk			

Note: all contacts should be made via Liz Walker)

David Mackie	Area Youth Worker	01962 876266	07813 038638
david.mackie@hants.gov.uk			
Martin King	DofE Field Officer	01962 876299	07985 524273
martin.king@hants.gov.uk			
Peter Stokes	Youth Worker	01962 876342	07957 382934
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Kate Hadley Youth Support Worker	01962 878300	07966 808961
kate.hadley@hants.gov.uk		
Laura Kirkby Youth Support Worker	01962 876358	07854 190496
laura.kirkby@hants.gov.uk		
Owen Rist Youth Support Worker	01962 876360	07854 190472
owen.rist@hants.gov.uk		

All staff are based at; Clarendon House, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 5PW.

Youth Clubs Hampshire & Isle of Wight

Andy Upson 01962 852307
St Thomas' Centre 20 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9EF

HYO – Hampshire Youth Options – Mark Dixon – Director

WCC

Lorraine Mansfield - Community Wellbeing Manager x 2369 Joint appointment by
WCC & NHS Hampshire (PCT)
Nicola Lawrence - Community Wellbeing Officer x 2497
