

## Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

**Meeting:** Children, Families and Schools Sub-Committee

**Date:** Monday 14 June 2004

**Report of:** Director Children, Families and Schools

**Subject:** Strategic Review of Youth Support Services

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To propose a strategic review of Youth Support Services in Brighton & Hove in order to consider current service delivery across the city. The review will:
- explore consider options for commissioning and delivery of youth support services which can provide a high quality service, maximising the available resources, and taking account of stakeholder views, Ofsted standards, local and national performance indicators.
  - explore relationships between the local authority youth services, schools, colleges, Connexions and voluntary sector and other providers
  - Consider the place of youth support services in the proposed integrated area based teams, and their relationship to the Children's Trust
  - make recommendations to this sub-committee on any changes as a result of the review

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members agree to a strategic review of Youth Support Services, working to the proposed terms of reference attached as annex 1.
- 2.2 That the review should commence no later than January 2005, with funds from within the service, along with any partner contributions, to be negotiated as part of the work programme of the Children's Trust.

### 3. Information/background

- 3.1 There was a strategic review of voluntary and local authority funded youth service carried out in 1996, in preparation for Brighton & Hove unitary authority. East Sussex County Council had outsourced the operation of its youth service to the then Brighton College of Technology (now City College).
- 3.2 Following the review and further consultation, the youth service was brought back in house in 1998. It is now managed partially through the local authority team, and through service level agreements with Portslade Community College and a number of local voluntary organisations.
- 3.3 There are a number of reasons to consider a new review of Youth Services during 2004/05, and these are set out in the proposed terms of reference attached as annex 1. The context for youth services has developed with a national framework, contained within the Learning and Skills Act 2000, which gave the statutory framework for the Connexions Youth Support Service, and “Transforming Youth Work” issued in 2001.
- 3.4 Brighton & Hove Youth Service has embraced these changes and is working in active partnership with Sussex Connexions, managing the delivery of intensive Personal Advisers in schools and Colleges. In addition 80% of the core Youth Service is also delivered to Connexions targets of increased participation and achievement in education, training and employment for 13-19 year olds. There are also a range of health and social targets and indicators which guide the service delivery, all of which have been considered previously and approved by this sub-committee.
- 3.5 Now that Sussex Connexions has been in operation for nearly two years, it is timely to consider how our Youth Service is operating within this new context, and also in the light of the development of the Children’s Trust and integrated area teams.
- 3.6 We have also had an approach from a local voluntary sector provider asking the Council to consider further partnership with non-maintained organisations in the delivery of youth services. It is proposed that the strategic review should consider this suggestion further, and consider the deployment of current staff resources, the capital stock, and the monitoring and standards agenda which now govern the operation of youth services.
- 3.7 It is therefore intended that the review should also cover value for money and capacity issues. As councillors will be aware, the service operates on a low funding base in comparison to many other authorities. We are some way from the Government’s recommended £100 annual expenditure on

youth services for each 13-19 year old. (Detailed figures are set out in annex 1). This is not an indication of the lack of value placed on the service, but rather an acknowledgement of the difficulty in transferring funds from other areas of service in the current financial climate for the authority.

- 3.8 The Youth Support Service has been extremely effective in securing grants, contracts and partnership funds which have doubled the base budget and allowed a much wider range of projects to take place. This is not without cost to the dedicated staff team who operate within a slender infrastructure. A short term operational review has been commissioned to look at the capacity of the organization currently, and this will inform the strategic review once it commences.
- 3.9 Members are asked to consider the attached terms of reference, and to approve them as a guide for the strategic review. The costs of this will be born within the current service budget. Partner organisations will be asked if they wish to contribute to the wider agenda of the service review, as part of the work programme of the Children's Trust.
- 3.10 The timing of the review has to be set within the framework of the Directorate Development Plan and the Children's Trust work programme. It is proposed that the review should commence no later than January 2005.

#### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 Youth Support Service staff  
Connexions Local Management Committee  
The Council's Management Team and leadership group  
The Children's Trust Chief Officers' Group  
Representatives of the voluntary sector with an interest in youth services

## COMMITTEE REPORT APPENDIX



<b>Meeting/Date</b>	Children, Families and Schools Sub-committee 14 June 2004
<b>Report of</b>	Director of Children, Families and Schools
<b>Subject</b>	Strategic Review of Youth Support Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

### **Financial implications**

The cost of the review will be met from savings from staffing vacancies within the current youth service budget. Full details of the current finances of the Youth Service are contained within annex 1 of the attached terms of reference  
Finance Officer consulted Sukey Booth / Paul Brinkhurst 19 May 2004

### **Legal implications**

There are no immediate legal implications to draw to members' attention. Legal issues may arise as a result of the review and will need to be investigated as necessary

Lawyer consulted: John Heys Date 25 May.

### **Corporate/Citywide implications**

The Youth Support Service contributes to the corporate objective of achieving thriving 14 year olds. It contributes to the Connexions objectives and targets, the 14-19 education agenda, community safety and health targets for young people. It also makes a significant contribution to arts and leisure for young people.

### **Risk assessment**

The terms of reference for the review have to be achievable within the limited financial and staff resource which can be allocated to it, hence the start date being no later than January 2005.

### **Sustainability implications**

There are financial and capacity issues of sustainability for the service, particularly due to the number of short-term funded initiatives. The curriculum of the youth service includes environmental education and local projects.

### **Equalities implications**

Equality of opportunity to participate within the youth service and broader agendas of citizenship, achievement and progression are at the heart of the youth support service. The implementation of these aspirations should be tested as part of the strategic review and equalities auditing of the service delivery plan.

### **Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder**

It is generally accepted that the availability of quality youth activities can make a positive contribution towards community safety.

## COMMITTEE REPORT APPENDIX



### **Background papers** *[Part 1 reports only]*

1. Previous reports on Connexions and the Youth Support Service CFS 2003 and before.
2. Resourcing Excellent Youth Services DfES 2003

### **Contact Officer**

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